NEW DIALOGUES OF THE *GODS*; OR, REFLECTIONS UPON THE *PASSIONS*:

WITH

A DISCOURSE upon the Nature of DIALOGUE.

BIBLIOTHECA BODLEIANA

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Translated from the *French*

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The Right Honourable

GEORGE

Lord *Lanſdowne*,

Baron of Bideford, *Comptroller of Her Majeſty's Houſhold, and one of Her Majeſty's moſt Honourable Privy-Council*, &c.

My LORD,

HAVING the Misfortune of being frequently confin'd, "by a Conſtitution broken by the Intem-

perature of foreign Climates, Your *Lordſhip* will as little wonder that I amuſe my ſelf with Writing, as that any Performance of mine ſhould prove infinitely below Your *Lordſhip*'s Regard. So far am I from being *Stoic* enough to have a *Soul* detach'd from a Senſe of *Pain*, that I have great Reaſon to apprehend, the *Reſtleſſneſs* of the *Mind* contributes infinitely to the Diſorder of the *Body*, and that both conſpire to give an unpleaſant Tincture to *Works* of this kind, eaſily diſcernable to a Perſon of Your Lordſhip's Penetration. But I am very Confident, that an *exalted*

alted Genius, adorn'd with all thoſe Advantages, which the Nobleſt *Sciences*, and *Brighteſt Converſation* are able to produce, does not more diſtinguiſh Your *Lordſhip*, than thoſe *Excelling Qualities* of the *Heart*, which induce You to look down with the utmoſt Condeſcention and Good-nature upon the *Inſufficiencies*, as well as the *Misfortunes* of *Mankind*. Your *Lordſhip* has the peculiar Privilege of being *Great* and *Noble*, without making others ſenſible of their *Littleneſs* and *Inſignificancy*; and conferring Your Favours with an *Air* and *Expreſſion*, as Remote

from an *Oſtentation* of *Humility* as *Pride*, Your Lordſhip diſcovers a Natural and Invincible Diſpoſition to do Good: And inſpire all who approach You with a Secret Ardor of heaping more and greater Honours upon you than thoſe, of which Your *Lordſhip* ſeems to diveſt Your Self in ſo obliging a Manner.

As no body has experienc'd, in ſo high a Degree as my ſelf, the Effects of thoſe *Virtues* which render Your Lordſhip the *Delight* and *Ornament* of this Age, I beg leave to declare my ſelf as Ambitious, as Incapable of expreſſing the moſt

moſt grateful Reſentments; and by my Silence and Confuſion to Revere that *High Merit*, which I can as little exaggerate, as equal in Diſcourſe. I am, with the utmoſt Reſpect and Gratitude,

My LORD,

Your moſt Obedient and

moſt Humble Servant,

T. Reresby.

A

DISCOURSE

UPON THE

Nature of Dialogue.

IT *is ev'ry Man's Duty to pay Homage to his* Judge. *An* Author *does it in his* Preface, *and this ſort of* Petition *ought by its* Modeſty *to render the* Publick *favourable to him who makes it. To what End however do we make* Prefaces? *Generally ſpeaking they have little Influence upon the* Reader. *They frequently provoke him, and it is uſing him ill with a Vengeance, to abuſe his Patience in the* Work, *and raiſe his Indignation in the* Preface.

The

The Nature *of* Dialogues *has never been ſet in a true Light. This is the* Fate *of* ſimple Things. *In exchange of a* Preface, *I ſhall preſent you with my* Ideas *concerning* Dialogue. *Should they happen to prove impertinent, I ſhall not however fail of obliging the* Publick. *I ſhall not ſpeak one word of my ſelf.*

Dialogue *is the manner of Writing the moſt* antient; *it is credible that the firſt, whom either* Vanity *or* Leiſure *engag'd in the Labours of the* Mind, *made choice of this Method. Men having found the Means of communicating their Conceptions by the* Uſe *of* Words, *began to converſe together; and I very little queſtion but that the* natural Tendency *which all have to* Imitation, *induc'd them to give their* Writings *the* Form *of* Dialogue, *which in all likelihood muſt have been the moſt obvious.*

But as this way of Writing was Natural, *ſo they ſoon grew out of Humour with it. The* Sublime *on a ſudden ſtruck their* Imagination. *Men wou'd admit only of* Pompous *Expreſſions, which might ſound harmoniouſly in their Ears; and to amuſe 'em ſtill more, it*

was found neceſſary to entertain their Fancies *with* Images *full of Life and Vigour. Then it was that all* natural Graces *vaniſh'd, and a* beauteous Simplicity *became flat and inſipid.*

Truth *is not ſoon recover'd, when once loſt out of ſight; it is ever ſome* extraordinary Perſon *that traces her out.* Plato, *according to* Diogenes Laertius, *is he who re-eſtabliſh'd the manner of writing Dialogues. And altho'* Ariſtotle *makes* Zeno *of* Elis, *or* Alexamenes *of* Teos, *the Inventor; it has been agreed on all Hands to eſteem* Plato *the* Father. *The agreeable* Turn *he has given to theſe ſorts of* Entertainments, *deſerves very well the Honour of the Invention. Nor can too great a* Deference *be pay'd to* great Men.

I. Plato *was Born with that happy* Genius, *which gives the higheſt* Reputation. *A* mighty Eloquence, *and a world of* Sweetneſs *in his Stile, have procur'd him the* Admiration *of all* Ages. *His* Works *let us into vaſt Deſigns; and whatſoever is there obſerv'd to be* bold *and* majeſtick, *obligeth us to*

pardon

pardon what is ſometimes wanting in point of Juſtneſs. Abounding *with* Deſcriptions *he makes choice ever for his* Painting *of* agreeable Objects, *and makes 'em all as* ſinewy *as poſſible. The moſt abſtract* Reaſonings *acquire ſomewhat wonderfully* graceful *by paſſing thro' his* Imagination, *which is extreamly* florid; *and the Quality of* Philoſopher, *upon which he piques himſelf, does not make him renounce the Language of the* Poet. *The* Genius *of* Poetry *ſits well upon* Reaſon, *and never did a* predominant Imagination *deface any* Truth *which ſhe has been pleas'd to manage with* Moderation.

Plato's Metaphyſicks *have been worth to him a conſiderable part of his* Glory, *and have induc'd the greateſt Number of the* Fathers *of the* Church *to be of his* Party. *This does not ſurprize me; the* Object *of the* Metaphyſicks *is noble, and wonderfully ſuited to the* enterprizing Wit of Man. *But they expoſe at the ſame time his* Ignorance. *The Principles of things which this* Science *conſiders are entirely unknown to us; and there is no likelihood that* Nature, *who had her Rea-*

ſons

ſons for concealing them from us, ſhould at laſt in Compaſſion to our Curioſity *reveal them. The* World *is not yet recover'd perfectly of that ſort of* Madneſs *which leads to the* Diſcovery *of firſt* Eſſences. *But the Misfortune is not great. The* Enquiry *after* Truths *which are never to be found, has this in common with that of* Pleaſures. *It ſerves to* amuſe *us. But let us return to* Plato. *His* Metaphyſicks *diſcover an Aſcendancy of* Underſtanding. *Nay his very* Chimeras *do him* Honour.

I am better pleas'd with his Morality. *If ſhe does not ſhow what Man is, ſhe teaches however what he ought to be. Virtue here is the conſtant Subject of Diſcourſe, and of that Species which has the neareſt Relation to* Chriſtianity. *For this Reaſon does Monſieur* Dacier *eſteem him almoſt a* Chriſtian; *altho' St.* Cyril *of* Alexandria *accuſes him of* Hereſie, *for multiplying of* Natures *as well as* Perſons, *and for making the* Trinity *conſiſt of three* Gods *like the* Arians. *It is certain, that of all the* Pagans, Plato *profeſs'd the pureſt* Morality, *and the beſt adapted to the* Intereſt of Society.

And

And if it be true, that an Author's Language *does in ſome ſort warrant his* Morals, *it may with good Grounds be aſſerted, that* Plato *was ſtill more an* honeſt Man, *than a* great Genius.

It often happens to him not to remember in certain Dialogues *what he has ſaid in others; and frequent* Contradictions *ſhock thoſe* Readers *who have contracted the dangerous habit of* Reaſoning conſequentially.

The Antients *were not very preſſing to come at* Truth *the ſhorteſt way; they improv'd their* Pleaſure *by the time laid out in her* Courtſhip. Plato *is the moſt* diffuſive Author *that* Antiquity *has produc'd. A* ſlender Idea, *and that enough* Common, *furniſhes out ſometimes a very long* Dialogue. *And here we are oblig'd to pay an exceſſive Price for a ſmall Improvement.*

Plato *was however a* great Gallant, *and thought it no Fault to be ſo. Never does he mention* Love, *but he employs his fineſt Stile in its* Encomium. *And his* Imagination, *fir'd by the* Sentiments *of his* Heart, *becomes at leaſt one degree more* brilliant *than it was before.*

Speaking

Speaking of Beauty *you ſee him full of the* Raptures *ſhe inſpires. Theſe he adorns with high flown* Expreſſions, *which by the Confuſion they partake of, do paint to Perfection the* Diſorders *of* Love. *But nothing to my Fancy ſhows better his* gallant Genius *than that place in his* Phœdra, *where after having eſtabliſh'd his* Metempſicoſis, *he aſſigns nine different* States, *to which Men are deſtin'd, according to the Prevalency of their* Virtues, *or* Vices. *And he places in the firſt* Rank *the* compleat Lovers. Philoſophy *has not ever been of an uncouth and* ſavage Diſpoſition: *And* Plato *ſhows us that we may* Love, *without bluſhing for the Matter.*

Plato *brought Dialogues much into requeſt; and almoſt all the* Philoſophers *of his Time writ after this manner.*

II. *The* Latins, *who valu'd themſelves mightily upon their* Imitation *of the* Greeks, *borrow'd this way of writing from them.* Cicero, *altho' an* Orator, *and conſequently accuſtom'd to Set* Diſcourſes, *was of Opinion, that Philoſophy cou'd not be explain'd in a better way than*

than that of Dialogue. *For this Reaſon do we ſee, that the greateſt part of his* Philoſophical Works *are ſo modell'd.*

I cannot apprehend why Cicero *is generally reputed a great* Orator *only; and no Notice is taken of his being a* Philoſopher. *Is it not becauſe* Antiquity *has made her Boaſts of him in that* Quality *only, and that we are not allow'd to commend but after their Example? I grant that the* Pleadings *of* Cicero *are very beautiful, and paſs'd Ages had never certainly any* Orator *comparable to him. But why all thoſe* Encomiums *upon his* Eloquence, *which he deſerves with as great Juſtice upon the Score of his* excellent Reaſoning.

We lie under a fatal Prejudice *with regard to* ſuperior Genius's. *It is difficult to conceive how any Man can be poſſeſs'd of a great many* Talents *at one time. It looks as if* Nature *had counterpois'd her Favours, and that whilſt ſhe ſupply'd us with the means of ſucceeding in a certain manner; ſhe had induſtriouſly hinder'd our Progreſs in any other. That* Mind *however which practiſes a particular kind of Writing, has occaſion, in order to excell, for all pleaſing* Qualities

lities *that center in all the* Kinds *in general.* *A* Poet *muſt obſerve the Rules of* Juſtneſs, *that he may not ramble.* *An* Orator *ſhould poſſeſs all poſſible* Delicacy, *that he may feel thoſe* Movements *of the* Paſſions *in himſelf which he propoſes to excite in* others. *He muſt make uſe of ſome ſort of* Preciſion, *not to give his Arguments too large a* Range. *And* Philoſophy *in her turn cannot appear to the beſt Advantage, without a certain degree of* Elegancy *which is not natural to her.*

I have Cicero's *Authority for this.* *He was a compleat* Orator, *and an* excellent Philoſopher. *His ſecond Book of* Divination *is the beſt Diſcourſe that has been handed down to us by* Antiquity. Cicero *does there combat a* Prejudice *grounded upon* Superſtition, *and defended by* Philoſophers *then in greateſt Credit; and what is the moſt ſingular, he does it in the moſt abſtracted manner.* *His* Dialogues *upon* Oratory *have likewiſe their peculiar* Beauties. *He does not ſpeak of* Eloquence *in Quality of an* Orator; *but with the Exactneſs of a* Philoſopher. *Becauſe* Philoſophy *alone has the Right of praiſing the*

Charms

Charms *of* Eloquence. *What is farther remarkable in* Cicero's Dialogues, *is the choice he makes of his* Interlocutors, *and his great care of making them ſpeak conſiſtently with their* Character. *This is what the* Dialogue-mongers *of our Days ſeldom obſerve: Who inſtead of writing up to the* Character *of thoſe* great Men *they introduce, they give us their own, which no Body deſires at their Hands.*

Never does the Wit of Man purchaſe to her ſelf greater Honour, than when ſhe plays with thoſe Matters, which are in all Appearance capable of oppreſſing her. Furniſh'd ever with the moſt wholeſome Deſigns, Cicero *handles the moſt knotty Subjects with ſo pleaſant and eaſie an* Air, *as ſufficiently ſhow him to be their Maſter. He had a ſort of* Imagination *that was made purpoſely for the embelliſhing of* Truth, *and allotting it that proportion of Ornament as ſuffices to qualifie its Barrenneſs, without depriving it of the leaſt ſhare of its Vigour.*

From ſo many Qualities he does not aſſume the right of Deciſion. *He propoſes Truth ever with the* Modeſty *of a Man who* examines. *I can't imagine, why*

why this deciſive Air *has become ſo much* a-la-mode. *The World is not, it may be, appriz'd that it denotes as well* Vanity *as* Ignorance. *No ſooner does a Perſon take any* Object *under conſideration, but he becomes arrogant enough to pronounce Sentence upon it. I have turn'd it, cries he, on ev'ry ſide; have conſider'd ev'ry Feature, and ev'ry Senſe it will bear. Who is ſure of this? Who knows but that this ſame* Object *may have ſome* Aſpects *which were never preſented to his View? The Pleaſure of the* Examen *ought to ſatisfie our* Reaſon. *Dark and bounded as ſhe is,* Deciſion *does by no means become her; neither was it the cuſtom of* ancient Philoſophers *to form peremptory* Concluſions. *Some of them contented themſelves with looking a little into* Nature, *without flattering themſelves with the Notion of being perfectly acquainted with her. A* wiſe Miſtruſt *ſuffer'd them only to make ſome few Conjectures. More elated with this ſort of* Ignorance, *than they wou'd have been with that proud and* Chimerical Science *of other* Philoſophers, *they deſired to diſtinguiſh themſelves by it, and gave themſelves the* Name *of* Academicks.

micks. Cicero, *who inclin'd to join himself to one* Party *(for how is* Philosophy *to be attain'd without taking a Side) did not fail of embracing a* Sect *so agreeable to the* Tendency *of his own* Genius. *You see him as frequently in his* Works *as possible, dignifying himself with the* Title *of* Academick, *and observing ever the Reserve and* Moderation *of such: That* Modesty *which he ever preserv'd with regard to* Truth, *and which is so necessary for curbing the* Impatience *of* human Wit, *cannot be apply'd with too great advantage to his* Glory.

But his Modesty *was confin'd within the Pale of the* Sciences. *And this* Virtue *did always abandon him when he came to speak of himself. He is ever and anon putting his* Country *in Mind of the* good Offices *he had done it.* Cicero *was not prudent to boast his* Services *to such a degree. He had sufficiently rewarded himself by styling himself its* Father. *A* well concerted Vanity *wou'd have exacted a less* Acknowledgment, *and wou'd have procur'd him a much greater.*

Cicero *is likewise charg'd with* Cowardice, *and this with Reason. It is wonderful*

wonderful that a Philoſopher, *and what is more a* Roman, *ſhould entertain ſo poor a Spirit. I believe, never* weak Woman *was comparable to him in Point of* Cowardice. *His Letters to his Friend* Atticus, *declare him the moſt timorous* Creature *living. In them ſo elegant a Cowardice is ſeen to reign, as is ſufficient to infect the* Heart *of a* Reader. *And never was Paſſion painted in ſtronger Colours. This Frailty however is pardonable in him, ſince it occaſion'd the* Delicacy *of his* Imagination; *and it is common for the* Qualities of the Mind *to be counterpois'd by what Men call* Defects *in* Character.

One natural Conſequence of the Delicacy *of his* Imagination *was his* Penchant *to* Raillery. *Born with this malignant* Talent, *it was difficult for him to ſuppreſs the* Practice. Raillery *is arm'd with a double* Charm *wherewith to ſooth our* Vanity. *By her Aſſiſtance we modeſtly give an advantageous* Turn *to a* noted Imperfection. *And when we find our ſelves play'd upon, may acquire ſome* Glory *by a Repartee of Wit and Humour.*

III. *I muſt now ſpeak of* Lucian. *He is my* Hero; *I propoſe him for my* Model, *and it is after him that I make the* Gods *ſpeak. I did not however think my ſelf oblig'd to make them* argue *in his manner. All that he puts into their Mouths tends only to the Underſtanding of the* Fable; *and theſe things which might then have been of* Uſe, *ceaſing now to be ſo, I judg'd it proper to make their Diſcourſe turn upon other Subjects.*

Lucian *liv'd under the Reign of* Trajan, *and beyond that of* Marcus Aurelius, *who made him an* Intendant *in* Egypt. *Thoſe* Qualities *which make a* great Wit, *do ſometimes contribute to the making of a* Fortune: *And* Lucian, *who was Maſter of one of thoſe* Genius's *that pleaſe, cou'd not fail of raiſing himſelf above that humble State in which his mean Extraction had plac'd him. Abounding with Projects which naturally flow from a fine* Imagination, *he cou'd not perſuade himſelf to take up with the* Trade *of a* Carver, *to which his Parents had deſtin'd him; and he found himſelf under a Neceſſity of being a* Wit. Vigorous Parts *will not be kept under. For a long time he exercis'd the Profeſ-*

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ſion of Advocate. *But he ſoon grew tir'd of a Practice, wherein* Words *and* Figures *weigh'd more than* Things; *and ſtrength of* Lungs *can give ſome* Preference *and* Advantage.

He had recourſe at laſt to Philoſophy. *He was made on purpoſe for her. Thoſe current Opinions which bore the* Name *of* Syſtem, *and which ſome lazy* Philoſophers *had impos'd upon the Credulity of* Mankind, *did not paſs with him for* Truths. *A* declar'd Enemy *to all* Prejudice, *he had the Reſolution to maintain that* Void, *which* Reaſon *leaves in a* Mind determin'*d not to be ſatisfy'd with any thing leſs than* Demonſtration. *With this* Character *it was eaſie for him to diſcover the* Vanity *and* Impoſture *of* falſe Deities, *and never did any Body execute this* Deſign *with greater Abilities, or in a more entertaining manner than he.*

Inſpir'd with a diſcreet Zeal *againſt the* Philoſophers, *he never ceas'd inſulting over thoſe* Sects *which the* Ignorance *and* Curioſity *of* human Underſtanding *had multiply'd to ſo great a degree. They had a dangerous Adverſary of him. When* Lucian *lays hold of any thing worthy*

worthy of Ridicule, he never fails to expoſe it under more than one Form, and that is ſure to be a diverting one. Every thing that is inveſted with a great Name, *carries always a* je ne ſçai quoi *along with it, that is ſure to provoke his* Gout *for* Raillery; *and his* Stings *of* Satyr *are* Marks *of* Honour. Lucian *took care not to ſuffer any thing to eſcape him in* great Men, *that was liable to the Cenſure of a* Critick. *The* diſgracing *of an* Hero *is a never-failing way of* pleaſing. *Strange* Caprice *of* Men! *they are infinitely charm'd to ſee thoſe* humbled *whom they themſelves have* exalted: *And they behold with delight that* Work *demoliſh'd, which their* Vanity *ſuffer'd to be perfected with* Regret.

Lucian *poſſeſs'd a* Science *which is the Gift of* Nature. *He knew how to be agreeably Merry.* Ingenious Ladies *have his* Works *ever in their Hands, and are never tir'd with the Peruſal: It is this in my Opinion that gives him the higheſt* Encomium. Women *are natural* Judges *of good* Performances, *as well as our ſelves. And ſome are to be met with who have receiv'd from* Nature *ſo good an* Underſtanding, *as to want*

want no Aſſiſtance from Art *to make it perfect. This is what your* Virtuoſo's *can never pardon; nor indeed, have they any great* Reaſon *to be reconcil'd to a ſort of* Wit *that coſts nothing. Ever* Taſteleſs *and* Impolite *themſelvēs, they wou'd have* Truth *bear their* Reſemblance; *as if the* Sciences *ſhould loſe ſome part of their* Dignity, *by being eaſie of* Acceſs; *and the* myſterious Air *wherewith they are vail'd, contributed any thing to their* Beauty. *It is not impoſſible but that the* Learned *owe ſome ſhare of the* Admiration *generally pay'd 'em to this* artificial Diſguiſe. Lucian, *altho' himſelf a* Philoſopher, *did not paſs* Philoſophy *off for more than the intrinſick Value.* Simple *and* Delicate *in his manner of* Thinking. *he deliver'd his* Conceptions *with all poſſible* Perſpicuity.

Lucian *is however charged with corrupted* Inclinations, *and* Manners *too voluptuous, and this with* Juſtice; *they were ſuch as flow naturally from the* Paſſions, *when not diverted by a ſevere* Reaſon. *Having no fearful Apprehenſions about* Futurity, Lucian *did not think himſelf oblig'd to* Sacrifice

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the Preſent to it. Being altogether in the dark as to a Sovereign Intelligence *which he did not know, and of whoſe* Determinations *he was ſtill more Ignorant; he made no ſcruple of complying with thoſe* natural Inclinations *which he cou'd not imagine he had receiv'd on purpoſe to wage War with.*

The Underſtanding, *to ſecure her ſelf from* Rambling, *has occaſion for a more experienc'd* Guide *than her ſelf; and* bare Reaſon *by whoſe ſtrength* Lucian *ſufficiently diſcovers the* Impoſture *of* falſe Religions, *cou'd not without the* Aid *of an* enlightening Faith *raiſe himſelf to the* Knowledge *of a* divine Religion.

Beſides *the Character of* Incredulity, *which is thought worthy of Condemnation even in an* Heathen, Lucian *is likewiſe blameable for that* groſs manner *in which he treats the Subject of* Love. *This was, it may be, the fault of his Times. A* debauch'd *Stile was then in* Vogue, *and it is not long ſince* Authors *have become more* Chaſt *in their* Expreſſions. *I cannot ſay that* Morality *has got any great advantage*

by this Change. *I fear not.* Vice *is become more* deſirable, *by diveſting it of an* Ouſide *which of it ſelf afforded ſome* Rebuke. *The* Paſſions *are at this time of day ſo artificially diſguis'd, that we run into their Embraces without Shame; and how is it poſſible to be aware of the Danger, ſince* Vice *aſſumes all the* Appearances *of* Virtue?

Our Romances *abound with* Sentiments *that excite* Admiration; *and ſcarce is there any* Virtue *which is not there reduc'd into Practice. Whatſoever is* groſs *in* Love, *is by degrees ſoftned into* Delicacy; *and wou'd one not be apt to ſay that* Heroes *in* Romance *were intellectual* Subſtances, *to which Bodies have been annexed by way of* Acquiſition *only, but with no Deſign of making them ſubſervient to their* Pleaſures?

I have ſpoke of Plato, Cicero, *and* Lucian, *as three of the moſt* noted Authors *who have given their* Works *the* Form *of* Dialogue. *It is impoſſible too frequently to preſent Mankind with good* Models; *and ſuch as are* Antient *have this* Advantage *above others, that they*

they ſerve only to excite our Emulation. *I proceed now to ſay ſomething upon the Subject of* Dialogues; *I wiſh however, that before I enter upon what relates to them in particular, it were allow'd me to hazard ſome* Conjectures *upon what conſtitutes the* Beauty *of* ingenious Pieces *in general. This will not prove altogether impertiment to my Deſign, and what I ſhall advance in general will have ſome regard to* Dialogue *in particular.*

I take it for granted, Authors *wou'd gladly have me paſs over in Silence, that their whole purpoſe is to* pleaſe. *Don't let 'em pretend to* aim *at* Inſtruction. Vanity, *which inſpires the* Deſign *of* Writing, *will never ſuffer them to take up with that of* Correcting. *Beſides, are they not appriz'd that Men jealous of their* Failings, *are determin'd to retain them; and will ever reward thoſe very ill who ſhall preſume to diſpoſſeſs them of ſuch habitual* Favourites.

But upon this foot, it will be alledg'd that Authors muſt lay aſide all Thoughts of giving Leſſons. Truth *is*

attended with diſmal Lights. *Why ſhould Men perplex themſelves with* Sciences *frequently in themſelves uſeleſs? And being deſtin'd to act by* Sentiment, *they care little for greater* Illumination. *This ſort of* Reaſoning *goes near to condemn* us *to a State of* Ignorance, *but who wou'd think it? The* Paſſions *reſcue us from this Miſery.* Truth *thoroughly affected with the Senſe of her own* Indigence, *begs their* Aſſiſtance, *and embelliſh'd with their* Charms *ſhe acquires the Privilege of being* agreeable, *which before ſhe wanted. It is well worth our Notice, that the moſt taſteleſs* Reflections *do not only affect our* Underſtanding, *they alſo carry with them* a delicate Affinity *to our* Paſſions; *and it is this* Relation *more or leſs vigorous which forms the Attention we pay to* Truth, *and that* Eſteem *we put upon her.*

I undertake to ſhow, that in order to render our ſelves agreeable to human Underſtanding, *we need only conſult the* Means *of* ſoothing *its* Vanity, *and of indulging its* Supineſs.

Mankind

Mankind is both Vain *and* Idle, *and I queſtion whether any* Action *can be nam'd into which one of theſe* Paſſions *does not enter; and very often both the one and the other. Can we after this be ſurpriz'd at that Irregularity which mixes with our* Paſſions? *A* Heart *ever agitated by contrary* Movements, *can it be Maſter of a conſiſtent* Conduct? Vanity *incites us to* Action, Idleneſs *pulls us back; and the* Incentives *of one of theſe* Paſſions *make us renounce thoſe the other laid in our* Way. *It's true, we may become in ſome degree happy by* adjuſting *theſe two* Paſſions. *A gentle* Motion *does not diſcompoſe our* Idle *Diſpoſition, and makes our* vain One eaſie. *The* Mind *muſt experience a* Movement *like this, in order to receive all the Satisfaction ſhe is capable of.*

But let us conſider after what manner our Vanity *may be gratify'd, and our* Idleneſs *be accommodated.*

Singular Ideas, *and ſuch as ſet Men at Liberty from* Prejudices, *are of themſelves ſure of being* agreeable: *Exalted above vulgar receiv'd* Opinions, *they*

ſoon affect a Superioty *over thoſe who retain them. Is it not juſt they ſhould make themſelves ſome Amends for the Pain they felt in the Renunciation of former* Notions *which are ever* Dear? *And their* Vanity *is at the ſame time gratify'd, whilſt their* Minds *are furniſh'd with* Ideas *after a manner little common. A ſlender* Myſtery *renders Men* Alert; *a* gentle Effort *is pleaſing; and ſuch is the Nature of the* Mind *altho' in her ſelf* Lazy, *ſhe is glad ſometimes to try her* Strength *in purſuit of* Truth *that flies before her, but which may be overtaken.*

Delicate *and* ſubtil Notions, *that give ſo great* Pleaſure, *are only ſuch as afford ſome Exerciſe to the* Mind. Subtil Notions *coſt very dear, and it is ever painful to unravel them.* Delicate Notions *are thoſe, which to be underſtood ſuppoſes ſomewhat we muſt endeavour to divine. Now we are well enough ſatisfy'd to go in queſt of the Meaning, provided it does not require too much Time, and we are ſure of finding it at laſt.*

Should

Should we examine the Ornamental *Part of* Language, *we ſhall find it to ariſe principally from certain* Oppoſitions, *which throwing the* Mind *into ſome ſort of Perplexity, ſhe is ever pleas'd to diſengage her ſelf with Honour. At all times, upon the ſtarting of ſome* Idea, *when we don't appear ſtruck with that Impreſſion which it ought to make, we occaſion a ſort of Surprize very entertaining to the Company. That Contrariety which appears in what is ſaid, and what we conceive, carries ſome Poinancy along with it, and it is the Fate of all ſeeming Repugnancies in Expreſſion to have an agreeable Effect upon the Mind: And is it not by their Aſſiſtance, that we are able to praiſe Men into Raptures, and rally them into good Humour?*

So far you ſee the Vanity *of* Men *gratify'd, but this does not ſuffice. Enemies to every violent Emotion, we muſt qualifie it a little for them, and ſooth their* Idle Diſpoſition. *Nothing contributes more to this purpoſe than* Perſpicuity *in Diſcourſe.* Ideas *have a certain Order amongſt themſelves,*

which no body can fail of obſerving without incurring the Reader's Diſpleaſure; who cannot endure to be impertinently fatigu'd Thoſe Truths which have a natural Connexion, require being rang'd in their Places, and it is with the utmoſt Impatience we ſee one Idea *put before another which ought to precede it.*

Figurative Expreſſions *contribute likewiſe to the Solace of the* Imagination; *as ſhe would Experience ſome Pain in retaining thoſe* Ideas *which have no hold; we ought to preſent her with ſome* Terms, *which by* ſenſible Images *fix her, and relieve her from too great a Fatigue. Why ſhould* Authors *be ſo induſtrious to inveſt the* Movements *of the Soul with a ſort of* Perſon, *were they not perſuaded that by the Life and Vigour this imparts, they are able to correct the* Barrenneſs *and facilitate the Underſtanding of thoſe Reaſonings which they form upon her? It is with the ſame Deſign that they cauſe every thing to paſs into* Action, *which they might recite ſimply as* Hiſtorians. *They know the* Mind *had rather ſee a thing tranſ-*

acted

acted before its Eyes, than hear barely the Relation, and they never neglect to entertain it as effectually with what is paſs'd, as if it were really preſent.

The Clearneſs *exacted in all Conſtructions, proceeds only from a ſecret Inclination to* Idleneſs. *It is expected that a Phraſe ſhould import but one Senſe, and when it includes two it is eſteem'd improper; for by this means the Sight of the* Mind *being diſtracted, it would become the weaker, and labour more in the* Diſtinction.

Give me leave to take notice in this place, that Philoſophical Syſtems, *ſeemingly ſo tedious and fatiguing, pleaſe us for no other Reaſon than that they are calculated for our ſlothful Tempers. When we have once by their Aſſiſtance got the* Aſcendant *of the* ſublimeſt Truths, *we look down with Eaſe and Pleaſure upon all the reſt, rank'd in proper Order they preſent themſelves diſtinctly to our View. And the only remaining Care is, that of* Chuſing.

Theſe in my Opinion are the moſt general Means of gratifying human Underſtanding. *Whatſoever Pleaſures ſhe*

may find, as long as ſhe remains ignorant of their Cauſe, they do her no Honour. And I thought moſt People would be glad to know the Riſe *of thoſe* Beauties *which they ſee ſcatter'd, here and there in good Books. I ſhall now make it my Buſineſs to treat of what relates more particularly to* Dialogues.

A Dialogue, *in order to be perfect, muſt include an* Idea ſingular, *and* intereſting. *Men require it to be ſingular, becauſe they are* Vain, *and intereſting, becauſe expecting all their* Felicity *from their* Paſſions, *they have little to do with* Truths, *which affect them in no reſpect whatſoever. I ſay again, they require the* Idea *to be* Simple, *for ſo is ſhe the better conceiv'd; and the Mind which has been for ſome time upon the Stretch is glad to recollect, and repoſe her ſelf, were it for no other Reaſon than that ſhe might in the moſt expeditious Manner enjoy the Honour of the Diſcovery.*

Care is however to be taken not to lead the Reader the ſhorteſt way to that Truth, which we deſign to ſhow him. We muſt conſider his Abilities *as well*

as

as his Pleaſure. And the Courſe muſt not be rapid. But how beauteous ſoever an Idea *may be, ſhe requires however to be ſet off with Care. And an* Author *ought to ſuffer her to be courted ſome convenient time, before he delivers her up into the* Reader's *Poſſeſſion. Let no one pretend to ſay it would be much better to conduct Men directly to* Truth, *I maintain that nothing of this kind is to be done; and is it not in effect to do the greateſt Injuſtice to an* Author, *to demand from him the Surrender of that* Truth *in an Inſtant, the acquiring whereof coſt him ſo much Time and Trouble?*

Yes, I will aver it, how much ſoever I incur the Reſentment of great Wits, *who are fond of ſeizing of all that is eſſential in things, that the Reader is oblig'd to accompany his* Author *patiently, in the Road that leads to* Truth; *but whereas the latter has himſelf paſs'd the ſame already, he muſt conduct his* Novice *through the pleaſanteſt Ways; now if theſe are agreeable, they cannot prove too long or too ſhort.* Riding *Poſt is fatiguing to the Mind; and being of an active Temper, ſhe would ſoon grow weary of a dilatory Journey.*

Monſieur de Fontenelle *is wonderful in his* Dialogues. *No Body miſtruſts that he deſigns any Inſtructions. It ſeems as if that* principal Reflection *with which he cloſes a* Dialogue, *was the natural Conſequence of many other* Reflections *which went before, and that he cou'd not help it; and yet the whole* Dialogue *was form'd for the ſake of that only.*

As to what relates to Stile in Dialogues, *it cannot be too familiar. I confeſs, by this means we run a Riſque of making them ſeem flat and inſipid. But where is the Remedy? A* ſhining Quality, *is next Neighbour to a* Defect. *And that* Genius *which wou'd write up to* Nature, *falls ſometimes thro' inadvertency into an* exceſs *of* Simplicity. *Declar'd Enemies to the* Sublime Dialogues *will not ſo much as allow of bold* Figures; *genuine* Graces *are their* Allotment, *and they admit only of the Ornament of beauteous* Simplicity; *and it is in this poſſibly that the difficulty of their Structure conſiſts.*

The Oratory *and* Poetical Stiles *are much more tractable. To ſucceed well in theſe,*

these, we need only give the Imagination *a ſufficient degree of Heat, to deliver it of lively* Ideas, *and produce ſtrong* Images. *In* Dialogues *you are oblig'd to be unaffected, and reduc'd to a neceſſity of being natural; you are not allow'd to brighten up your Notions with any thing Foreign, nor muſt they borrow any thing from him who expoſeth them to View. When you make a* Poem *or an* Ode, *you paſs for one inſpir'd, and you have a* Muſe, *or a* God, *to whoſe account you may charge all the Excurſions you pleaſe to make. In a ſet* Diſcourſe *you aſſume ſtill greater Liberty, you feel your ſelf all on a ſudden mightily heated, from no ſort of Occaſion, and no manner of Provocation from any Body; or what is more diſcreet, you inflame your ſelf by juſt Degrees. In* Dialogue *you are not heated by any Body, and you are not allow'd to heat your ſelf The moſt ſimple Strain of Converſation is to be made choice of. And judge, pray, how melancholly a thing it muſt be for* human Wit, *to ſee it ſelf reduc'd to the* Rules *of* Nature.

Comedy *is a Species of* Dialogue, *where the* Rules, *in my Opinion, have*

been

been the beſt obſerv'd. Moliere *is inimitable in his way of making his* Actors *ſpeak. A* Simplicity *is obſervable in all his* Pieces, *which never leaves them.*

May I dare to ſay, and will it be allow'd me to advance a Paradox? Simplicity *ought to furniſh out the* Dialogue *of* Tragedy. *And is* Simplicity *any thing elſe but the* Art *of being affected as we ought to be; and of ſaying what we ought in Conſequence to the Impreſſions we receiv'd.*

The Antients had a ſort of Dialogue *of a ſingular* Nature. *The* Actors *gave you to underſtand by* Signs *and* Geſtures, *what they better cou'd have explain'd by* Words. *In Imitation of thoſe, we have admitted into our* Italian *Comedies* Mute Scenes, *which have been highly approv'd, and I don't believe that* Arlequin *and* Scaramouch *are any ways inferior to the* Pantomimes *of the* Romans.

The Antients did not reſt ſatisfy'd with making Comedies deſtitute of Words; in which however the Actors *explained themſelves in an intelligible manner. They fill'd up their* Interludes *with dancing*

cing Dialogues, *and* cadenc'd Movements *deſcrib'd thoſe* Paſſions *by which they feign'd themſelves to be acted.*

The French Theatre, *careful of imbelliſhing it ſelf, has imitated from the Antients this ſort of* Dialogue; *and* Paris *is not tir'd with admiring to this Day the figur'd and gallant Dances of two perfect* Artiſts. *It is charming to behold all the* Characters *of* Love *expreſs'd by the Air of their Head; and the different Inflections of their Bodies, the Sentiments of the moſt tender Paſſion wrought up in the fineſt Verſe, and pronounc'd by the beſt* Actors, *wou'd not be able to affect us in ſo feeling a manner.* An Actor *ſpeaks all he has to ſay in the ſame Situation where you ſee him, and affords you no other Pleaſure but that of hearing him. Madam* Prévoſt, *and Mr.* Ballon, *by their Movements only, apprize you that they are* Lovers; *and provoke you to ſay in their ſtead what is proper for them to ſay to each other. An Entertainment like this pleaſes the* Mind *infinitely; and when we ſuffer her to range freely upon the Subject of the Paſſions; ſhe goes ever a greater length, than we cou'd otherwiſe oblige her.*

I have now given you my Thoughts upon the Nature *of* Dialogues. *I have endeavour'd to ſhow in what their Excellency conſiſts. I have even pretended to ſet down Rules, on purpoſe to render them as* agreeable *as poſſible. But that ſort of* Genius *which preſcribes Methods, does not always allow us to put them in practice. The* quickeſt, *and generally the moſt* abſtracted *Apprehenſions, diſcover the Excellency in any thing. But it muſt be a ſprightly and pliant Genius that is able to take the* Model, *and work it up to Perfection. I don't pretend to have follow'd my own Rules, nay more, I believe my ſelf extreamly defective. I have ſaid that a Dialogue, if it be perfect, muſt include one ſingle* Idea; *which after it has been ſome convenient time expected by the* Reader, *is at laſt to be declar'd. I have ſaid that this* Idea *muſt be* Simple: *I have however in ſome* Dialogues *unluckily preſented you with two* Ideas. *I will not excuſe my ſelf, but beg leave to ſay, that few ſingle* Ideas *are ſufficiently fruitful to furniſh out a* Dialogue *of a ſufficient length: And altho' a particular Deference ought to be pay'd to the*

idle

idle *Temper of the* Mind, *I think however that one had better run the Riſque of fatiguing it a little, than of expoſing it to an Irkſomeneſs which is not to be endur'd. We live in an Age very inconvenient for* Authors. *The* Reader *demands fine things, and expects to be gratify'd immediately. Nay, I believe the Honour of any Diſcovery wou'd be intirely forfeited, ſhou'd he be ſuffer'd to languiſh long after it.*

A Man muſt have a pretty good Opinion of his Reader, who dares to lay any thing to his Charge before-hand; but what does he Riſque, and will he not chearfully pardon the Fatigue he is oblig'd to go through, when he ſees how far the Author *preſum'd upon the Excellency of his Judgment? I ſhall farther add for my Juſtification, that when I place two* Ideas *in one* Dialogue, *I took care to make them go Hand in Hand; and that their Affinity ſhould make a ſort of* Unity.

It now lies upon me to anſwer an Objection which will infallibly be made, and which I ſtarted to my ſelf.

I obſerve no Decorum *with the Gods whom I have occaſion to introduce, that I might with greater Conveniency expoſe the weak ſide of Men; and frequently in my* Dialogues *they do a little derogate from their Dignity. But pray! ſuch as the Poets repreſent them are they not ſubject to the ſame Frailties as our ſelves? Are they not influenc'd by the ſame* Paſſions; *and deſigning the* Reformation *of* Men, *may I not be allow'd to decry their* Vices *in the ſame* Gods *who ſeem to juſtifie them?*

This is what I thought proper to acquaint the Reader *with before-hand, and I beg he will ſometimes remember, that I make the Gods ſpeak with deſign to inſtruct Men. A Dialect more conſiſtent with the Majeſty of the Gods, might have made my* Dialogues *appear more exact; but they wou'd have prov'd it may be more perplex'd and intricate. They are already too inſipid, and I am very well appriz'd that they are defective in one thing; which is* Pleaſantry. *At all times when we pretend to examine any Matter to the bottom, we muſt lay aſide all Thoughts of trifling; and it being*

ing my Misfortune to fall upon the Project of making War upon Prejudice, *I found my ſelf oblig'd, the better to put my Deſign in Execution, to go up to the Source of ſome* Principles *which are dry and taſteleſs, and I did ſo. I am ſenſible how dearly I muſt pay for this manner of Proceeding; but I have Reſolution enough to expoſe my ſelf to the Fury of a Reader, who never fails of being reveng'd upon the* Author *who does not entertain him.*

I am well enough pleas'd with giving again Notice, that ſometimes I render all human Virtues *as contemptible as poſſible, but I ſuppoſe this may be taken kindly at my Hands. It is impoſſible ſufficiently to illuſtrate the Neceſſity wherein theſe* Virtues *ſtand of being purify'd by a ſupernatural Power. That* Mortification *which an impartial Enquiry in our* brighteſt Qualities *is ſure to produce, ought to inſpire us with the reaſonable Pride of reforming them. To poſſeſs Men throughly with a Senſe of their* Imperfections *is to prepare their* Hearts *for the* influence *of* Grace, *and diſpoſe them to the Attainment of thoſe* Chriſtian Virtues

tues *which alone are capable of giving the* Soul *that Sentiment of* Excellence *which ſhe is ſo fond of.*

As Vanity *is the firſt moving Spring of* moſt Undertakings, *ſo it remains I ſhould ſay ſomething upon that Head. But I ſhall chuſe rather to ſubmit to the Mercy of the* Publick; *and ſhall no longer amuſe it with my* Work. *There is ever a* Pride *in ſpeaking of our ſelves, even with* Modeſty. *But is there greater Modeſty in being ſilent? No. That* Vanity, *which lies conceal'd, to make her ſelf amends for the pain of inward Struglings, becomes thence more* Vigorous, *and for the ſame Reaſon only more* Delicate.

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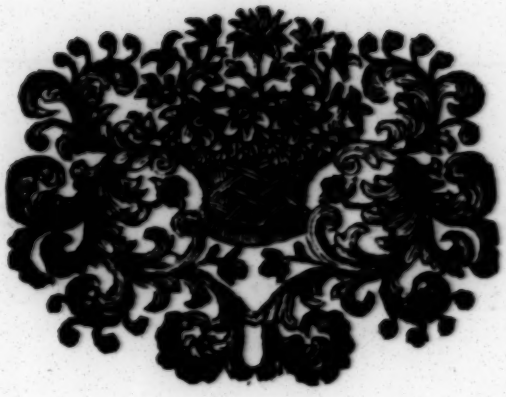

NEW

NEW DIALOGUES OF THE GODS.

DIALOGUE I.

A Comparison of Love and Avarice.

LOVE *and* PLUTUS.

LOVE.

THAT Condition of yours in my Opinion is a very comical one: You possess all the *Treasures* of the Earth: You are the *God* of *Riches*. Yet with all these you are not a whit the happier, if you defer their Enjoyment to all Eternity.

PLUTUS.

As for your Part, you have nothing to anſwer for upon that Score, and every Body knows how eager you are for enjoying.

LOVE.

I grant it. Do you take care however to juſtifie your ſelf.

PLUTUS.

To this End I need only ſet right a vulgar *Error* of the *Imagination*. It's a general Opinion, that to make an agreeable uſe of my *Mony* I ought to ſhare it with other People. *No. Vanity* did never furniſh me with a Notion of ſuch like Pleaſures. *Avarice* ſupplies me with better. Ah! were you ſenſible how much my manner of Enjoyment has the Advantage, and how ſuperior it is to yours! No ſooner have you *poſſeſs'd*, but your *Deſires* deſert you. You fall inſtantly in a State of Fainting, and *Inſenſibility*, out of which you never recover, 'till you find your ſelf recruited

cruited by *new Deſires*. As for my part, I don't ſo forfeit my *Happineſs*. The *Poſſeſſion* of my *Stores* ſerve only to irritate the *Paſſion* of encreaſing them, and this *Paſſion* is not a *Pain*, as amongſt *Lovers*. My Oeconomy ſecures a laſting Pleaſure.

LOVE.

But you are rack'd with a reſtleſs fear of loſing the *Bleſſing* you *enjoy*.

PLUTUS.

This is our common Misfortune; it is convenient that Matters ſhou'd be ſo order'd. We ſhou'd otherwiſe *Slumber* over our good Fortune; and remain inſenſible of its true Value, had we no uneaſie Apprehenſions of loſing it. But this is an agreeable *Sollicitude*, and ſuch as is requiſite for quick'ning the Taſte of my *Pleaſure*. The Caſe is quite otherwiſe with you *Lovers*. Your *Jealouſies* are too well grounded to admit of any Allay of *Happineſs*. The leaſt Stroke of *Caprice* which you are not able to

parry, caſts you headlong from the Pinnacle of *Felicity*.

LOVE.

Well, what do you hence inferr? That there are *Infirmities* in *Love*? I agree there are: But will you therefore preſume to make a Compariſon betwixt your *Pleaſures*, and thoſe wherewith the ſweeteſt of all the *Paſſions* inſpire us?

PLUTUS.

Why not? I will maintain that all Men reſt better ſatisfy'd under my *Government* than yours. Don't pretend to alledge that *Covetouſneſs* is cry'd down; I am ſenſible it is ſo; but this happens from a Principle of *Revenge*. As it is in no Body's Power to extinguiſh their *Happineſs* who have a true taſte of *Covetouſneſs*, ſo has the World deny'd 'em the Conſolation of being reputed *Happy*; and this is all the Miſchief it has been able to do them.

LOVE.

LOVE.

It is pity no greater Puniſhment can be inflicted; for is not *Avarice* the moſt hateful of all the *Paſſions*? All others unite Men amongſt themſelves, eſtabliſh a Commerce which makes the *Bonds* of *Society*. Conſider a little the Nature of *Love*. He declares his *Sentiments*, and receives others in return. So it fares with *Glory*. The way to receive *Applauſe* is to give it. It is *Avarice* alone who refers all to her ſelf, and never makes any *Return*.

PLUTUS.

This is her only Failing. But what does it ſignifie? In the Interim, ſhe renders thoſe *Happy*, who are influenc'd by her *Maxims*.

LOVE.

I don't know what I can ſay more. But thoſe *Pleaſures* muſt be very inſipid, which are not *Communicative*.

PLUTUS.

So you fancy to your ſelf. But *Nature* has made ſome *Pleaſures Diffuſive*, others *Solitary*.

LOVE.

Suppoſing this to be true, *Covetouſneſs* however would not ceaſe to be a horrid *Paſſion*. She is uſeful to him alone who is govern'd by her.

PLUTUS.

But you who reflect ſo ſpitefully upon *Avarice*, do you know that there is a Sort of *Avarice* in *Love*? That no Perſon whatſoever cares to divide his *Miſtreſs* with another, no Means are neglected for ſecuring the *Bleſſing*, nothing ſpar'd for its Improvement. *All* the *Paſſions* wear the ſame *Characters*, and become eſtimable from the moment they are thought capable of making us *Happy*.

LOVE.

It's true, but there are *Paſſions*, which at the ſame time they eſtabliſh our

our *Felicity*, contribute to that of others.

PLUTUS.

I allow it, but *Nature* has contriv'd ſuch as have regard to our ſelves only.

LOVE.

True. The one are call'd *Virtues*, the other *Vices*.

DIALOGUE II.

Upon Eloquence.

MERCURY *and* MINERVA.

MINERVA.

PRAY what did *Jupiter* propoſe to himſelf by making you the *God* of *Eloquence*, and *Thieving*, at the ſame time? Was the latter *Attribute* honourable enough to be aſſociated with the former? Ah! let me

perſuade you to lay down ſo ſtrange a *Divinity*. It is no ways becoming a God to command an Army of *Banditti*, and give Countenance to their *Crimes*.

MERCURY.

Ah! for God's Sake let *Heav'n* be as it is, a thorough *Reformation* would prove very troubleſome. But, pray, by whoſe Authority do you ſpeak ſo diſreſpectfully of *Thieving*? Does not the very *Trade* carry a Suppoſition of *Art* and *Addreſs* along with it? And a Sort of *Intrepidity*, which does not ſuffer them to appear altogether contemptible? If you proceed to provoke me, I ſhall affirm they deſerve ſome Eſteem, altho' it were not much amiſs ſometimes to puniſh them according their Demerits. *Lycurgus*, who was a Man of good Senſe, differ'd with you in Opinion, and brought *Thieving* into great Repute. According to him, It was a handſome *Prelude* to the *Trade* of *War*. Take this Matter into ſerious Conſideration. *Thieving* has been the School of

of all the great Men *Lacedemon* produc'd.

MINERVA.

By *Lycurgus*'s leave, I ſhall ever abominate that Species of Men, whoſe *Function* it is to pick other Peoples Pockets. But pray tell me how comes it to paſs that our great *God Jupiter* has reunited theſe two *Divinities* in your Perſon? Was it not that he ſpy'd ſome *Talents* in you, which qualify'd you for theſe two *Employments*? Or that there was ſome affinity between 'em? In effect, *Eloquence* is a ſort of Roguery; it is an Art of taking Men by Surprize, or a delicate Manner of ſeducing them.

MERCURY.

There is another Species of *Eloquence*, which is not a delicate Manner of *ſeducing*. A ſtrong and ſprightly *Eloquence*, which neglecting all Manner of *Art*, makes uſe of no other *Arms*, but its *Natural Strength*, ſuch is that of *Demoſthenes*.

MINERVA.

Ah: That Species of *Orators* are not the leaſt Dangerous, we are ever upon our *Guard* againſt ſuch, and were it not through *Vanity*, it's well known how to reſiſt them; I ſhould be much more jealous of an able and delicate *Orator*, who concealing his Deſigns, endeavour'd to ſurprize me. As I ſhould not be *aware* of the *Attack*, I ſhould not think of defending my ſelf, and ſhould have the Satisfaction of ſubmitting, without the Imputation of *Diſgrace*.

MERCURY.

Remain therefore no longer ſurpriz'd at what appears to you ſo whimſical in the Allotment of two *Divinities*, wherewith I am honour'd. There are a thouſand Things which appear Ridiculous, and are found reaſonable upon *Examination*. The *Wit* of a *Critic* does ſometimes diſcover its own Imperfection; and *Reaſon* ſometimes *Cavils*, only becauſe ſhe is ſhort-ſighted. But ſince we are upon

on the *Merits* of our *Attributes*, pray tell me how you come to be conſtituted the *Goddeſs* of *War* and *Wiſdom* at the ſame time? In my humble Opinion, you cannot well enjoy one of theſe *Qualities* without giving up the other.

MINERVA.

Pray how come you ſo well inform'd? War has ſome *Privileges*, to which you are a perfect Stranger. *War removes from Society all that is Evil.* It is a *Venom* prepar'd for purging a *State*, and carrying off all hurtful Humours. Beſides, how come you to fancy that *Men* are to be under the Conduct of *Reaſon?* Ah! I am too much their Friend, to give 'em ſuch a *Guide*. They muſt neceſſarily have their *Follies*, nothing elſe can pleaſe and amuſe them.

MERCURY.

I believe they have no Reproaches to make you upon that Head. You have made them as compleat *Fools* as they poſſibly can be.

MI-

MINERVA.

I muſt have had them as great *Coxcombs* as they are, to juſtifie the Wiſdom of my own Conduct. It is by *Follies* that I govern the *Univerſe*. I ſhould not find my Account, in governing it by *Reaſon*. And to what purpoſe ſhould Men be *Reaſonable*? Is it not ſufficient that they imagine themſelves to be ſo?

MERCURY.

How can you deſire them capable of ſo groſs an Impoſition?

MINERVA.

Oh! Men are *Fools*, but they are not *Ideots*. Judge of them your ſelf, and obſerve their *Artifice*; they have made their *Follies* ſo many *Virtues*.

MERCURY.

If this be the Caſe, I muſt allow them their juſt Applauſe, for having found the Means of enjoying the Charms of *Folly*, and maintaining the Honour of *Wiſdom*.

DIA-

DIALOGUE III.

Upon Wiſdom.

APOLLO *and* VENUS.

APOLLO

CAN you not once make a good *Choice*, and ſtick by it? Muſt your new *Adventures* be the eternal Subject of Diſcourſe?

VENUS.

Find me a *Lover* whoſe *Tenderneſs*, ever ſincere, will never ſuffer me to languiſh under the want of *Pleaſure*, and I promiſe you to be ever *Conſtant*.

APOLLO.

Very well; you extract from an *Object* all the *Good* you can, and when it is exhauſted you fly to another.

VENUS.

VENUS.

Well, and what have you to ſay againſt this Conduct? Is it in my Power to make my Deſires laſting? Beſides, were I really Miſtreſs of my own Inclinations, it wou'd however be a Point of Wiſdom to render them ſucceſſive to each other. The firſt *Deſires* which ariſe from an *Object*, are the beſt wherewith it can inſpire us. Theſe are the *fragrant Flowers* of *Loves Pleaſures*; the reſt fade and grow flat upon our Hands.

APOLLO.

This Moral is too good, for you to hold to the ſimple Speculation.

VENUS.

For which Reaſon I ever took care to reduce it into *Practice*: But you who charge me with *Inconſtancy*, do you know that you are more ſubject to it than I? No ſooner have you made a Diſcovery of one *Truth*, but you run in queſt of another. Why don't you reſt ſatisfy'd?

APOLLO.

APOLLO.

There lies the Difficulty. We *Virtuoſo's* are ſtung with a furious Itch of *Knowing*. Can you believe that we ſhou'd find as much Pain in deſerting the Purſuit of farther Diſcoveries, as you wou'd in quitting the Chace of *Pleaſures*? For, in a word, we have our *Needs* as well as you; and the *Mind* is poſſeſs'd with *Intemperances*, as hard to be ſuppreſs'd as thoſe of the *Heart*.

VENUS.

But methinks you ſhou'd grow weary of continual *Reſearches*; for, beſides that, I believe you find your ſelves rarely recompens'd for your Fatigues. Is the Mind equal to ſuch inceſſant Labours?

APOLLO.

Oh! when we are weary of our Enquiries, we have a *Remedy* at hand. We reſolve to *believe*. By this means we recover Breath, in order to continue the *Courſe*.

VENUS.

VENUS.

How! is it by dint of *Tireſomeneſs* only that you *Believe*. I never ſhould have thought it.

APOLLO.

It's true, however.

VENUS.

Will this Expedient ever ſerve your Turn? For you muſt of Courſe be frequently in Suſpenſe. There are a world of Things we ought not to believe, without having ſeriouſly examin'd them.

APOLLO.

We doubt the leaſt we can: Doubting fatigues the Mind. It is a State attended with too great Commotion: We wou'd willingly enjoy the Pleaſure of *Believing*, without the trouble of *Examining*.

VENUS.

Where lies the Neceſſity of *Examining*? *Ignorance* wou'd be worth to you

uſeful Effects they produce? Without that *Inquiſitive Temper*, of which they cannot diveſt themſelves? The *World* would prove only a mighty Heap of *Sluggards*, whoſe Buſineſs would be to gaze at each other, or doze in an Eternal *Inactivity*.

VENUS.

That is as much as to ſay, *Nature* has prudently determin'd that Mankind ſhould be in perpetual Agitation; and in order to gain her Point, ſhe has moſt artfully propos'd ſome *Deſign* to their Purſuit, which however they muſt never *attain*.

APOLLO.

Very right.

VENUS.

As for my Part, I am very well ſatisfy'd that *Nature* has put the *Heart* into Motion. An unactive one would prove a very Melancholy Companion. But in my Opinion ſhe might have ſuffer'd the *Mind* to be at *Reſt*. I cannot conceive how an *Agitation* there can be agreeable. A-

APOLLO.

I ſee plainly that you imagine *Love alone* to be capable of furniſhing us with *Delight*. This evinces that you have been extreamly pleas'd with his Entertainments; but learn from me, that there are *Pleaſures*, which tho' they be of another Species, are not however leſs *Delicious* than thoſe of *Love*. Ah, had you ever ſeen a *Virtuoſo*, the moment after he had laid hold of ſome important *Truth* In what Tranſports would you not have beheld him? Never did *Lover*, poſſeſs'd of the dear Object, whom with the moſt ardent Paſſion he had long purſu'd, experience more delicious Raptures. And why not? Does he not, like him, enjoy the Honours due to *Victory*? What do I ſay? He ought to eſteem himſelf more *Glorious*. He is indebted to himſelf for all, to *Caprice* for nothing. His *Attention* found the way of ſubduing an obſtinate and rebellious *Truth*.

VE-

VENUS.

You hence infer that *Science* is a *Paſſion* as well as *Love*, and an agreeable *Paſſion* too.

APOLLO.

I am not ſure that ſhe is as agreeable as that of *Love*. But I can affirm that all *Paſſions* are good. They are of too precious a Nature to be loſt: They ſhould be laid out to the beſt Advantage; and we ſhould dare to complain of not being provided with a ſufficient *Store*.

VENUS.

But *Wiſdom* forbids their *Uſe*.

APOLLO.

It may be ſo, and it becomes *Wiſdom* mightily to cry down the *Paſſions*, who is her ſelf one of the Number.

VENUS.

How? *Wiſdom* a *Paſſion*?

A-

APOLLO.

It is no eaſie Matter to believe: Becauſe ſhe declares *War* againſt them, and ſeems determin'd to deſtroy 'em Root and Branch. Do not however infer that, becauſe ſhe does not carry the *Title*, ſhe is not therefore poſſeſs'd with the ſame *Spirit*. And what? In order to ſet up her Empire in the *Heart* of Man, does not *Wiſdom* put it in *Agitation*; and is it not in this that the *Character* of the *Paſſions* conſiſts?

VENUS.

Fie! I will have nothing to do with one *Paſſion*, which will not endure the Company of others.

DIALOGUE IV.

Upon the manner of attacking a Heart.

PAN *and* VENUS.

VENUS.

NO; you cannot juſtifie your ſelf as to thoſe *Rigours* you ſuffer'd at the Hands of *Syrinx*. Not to have known the manner of ſubduing them, was in ſome ſort to have deſerv'd them. And is it not a ſcandalous thing for *Heav'n*, that a *God* ſhould fall in Love with a *Mortal*; and not know the manner of ſubduing a poor *Heart*?

PAN.

With what do you reproach me? Is it reaſonable my want of *Attractives* ſhou'd be imputed to me as a *Crime*?

VENUS.

VENUS.

Do you mean that he who pretends to *ſucceed*, muſt of neceſſity be as *engaging* as *Love* himſelf? No. The *Weakneſs* of our Sex diſpenſes with the Neceſſity of ſo many *Charms*.

PAN.

In what then was I defective?

VENUS.

You ought to have gone about the Buſineſs with more *Addreſs*. You wou'd not have then fail'd of Succeſs. It is certainly ſo. *Nature* has ſown in every *Heart* the general *Seeds* of *Tenderneſs*, whi.h ſpring up into a Paſſion for the different Sex. For this Reaſon no Body ſhould deſpair of being l:k'd; altho' he be not diſtinguiſh'd by one of thoſe *privi-le.ged Phyſiognomies* which of themſelves ſecure the *Conqueſt* of the *Heart*.

PAN.

PAN.

That is as much as to ſay, with the ſingle Quality of *Man* one may aſpire to the Honour of *Pleaſing*.

VENUS.

But the Gallant, who has nothing on his ſide but theſe general Diſpoſitions of *Tenderneſs*, which one Sex has towards the other, is not ſufficiently equipp'd with what is neceſſary for *Conqueſt*. *Art* ſhould be call'd in to his *Aid*. When you are appriz'd after what manner a *Heart* is faſhioned, you will find that its Subjection is not ſo hard an *Undertaking*. What is moſt obſervable, is, that the *Attack* is to be manag'd with the ſame Precaution as againſt a wall'd *Town*. *All Aſſiduities* are to be pay'd to the belov'd *Object*. Its *Diſpoſition* and *Humour* are to be ſtudy'd; you muſt endeavour, after you are acquainted with theſe, to manage 'em with all poſſible Indulgence. The *Conqueſt* is carry'd on by ſlow degrees, and at laſt you will become abſolute Maſter

of the *Place*. And when all is done, the Glory is not ſo great, as to furniſh any occaſion of *Vanity* to a *Lover*. That Inclination which diſpoſes us to a *Surrender*, abates extreamly the Honour of the *Victory*. But pray let me know a little in what manner you endeavour'd to ſucceed in your Deſigns upon *Syrinx*? I'll venture a Wager that at firſt Sight you appear'd tranſported with her Charms. And, as if a bare *Confeſſion* of your *Paſſion* were ſufficient to ſecure a Return, you diſcover'd to her a *Tenderneſs* the moſt affecting.

PAN.

You conjecture right.

VENUS.

You did the thing in the World which you ſhould have avoided moſt. The *Folly* of *Lovers* conſiſts in declaring their own *Deſires*, before they have inſpir'd the belov'd *Object* with the ſame. It's upon this Rock they are all Shipwreck'd. Such is the Nature of *Love*, it is *conceiv'd* in *Trouble*

Trouble and *Anxiety*. Theſe ſerve for his *Cradle*. Wou'd you excite a favourable *Paſſion*, find the way of perplexing the *Heart*. In this conſiſts the whole *Secret*.

PAN.

But is it poſſible that the way to gain a *Heart* is to give it a little *Pain*?

VENUS.

Certainly. There is not a *Heart* in *Nature* which does not like to Experience ſome little *Confuſion* and *Diſorder*. And when once it labours under the deſire of *Commotion*, there is nothing wanting but a *gentle Hand* to lead it out of that unactive State, which has been ſo irkſome to it. As for my Part, were I in Love, I ſhould not in the leaſt queſtion getting into Favour. For this purpoſe, I wou'd not endeavour to convince the Perſon I lov'd of the tender Sentiments wherewith he inſpir'd me, I ſhould be ſatisfy'd that he ſurmis'd as much; the Incertainty into which I

wou'd throw him, wou'd not fail to excite ſome *Uneaſineſs*; and this Uneaſineſs, manag'd to the beſt advantage in a *Heart*, would in a little time moſt infallibly produce *Love*.

PAN.

Well, now I know the whole *Secret* of the Matter, you need but give the Word of Command; and I'll make as many *Conqueſts* as you pleaſe. But pray how ſhall I ſecure them when made? Have you any particular Receipt for that Purpoſe.

VENUS.

No; the ſame *Trouble* and *Anxiety* which ſeduces a *Heart*, ſecures the *Poſſeſſion*. But the *keeping* of it to ones ſelf is much more difficult than the *Conqueſt*. It frequently coſts us very little to get into *Favour*, but the maintaining of ſuch a Poſt is very *expenſive*. We are ſometimes too *Amorous* to be able to continue long *amiable*. We are not ſometimes enough affected with the *Object*, to incline *us* to manage with care a laſting

ing *Paſſion*. But the means of cheriſhing a conſtant *Vigour* in the *Heart* are ever ſure to him, who either is diſpos'd, or has leiſure to put 'em in Practice. Let a *Perſon* appear ever *New*, under what Form ſoever he ſhows himſelf; provided he be but *vary'd*, he cannot but render himſelf more *agreeable*.

PAN.

I am infinitely pleas'd at your having found a *Cure* for *Inconſtancy*. I ever engag'd in Love Affairs with a world of uneaſie Apprehenſions, when I reflected that the happieſt Amours were ſure to have an End.

VENUS.

But pray why ſo much concern'd? That ſort of *Conſtancy* has nothing in it ſo *delicious*. It is kept alive by *Cordials*, and carries in its Nature ſomething that diſpoſes it to a languiſhing Decay. To the purchaſe of *Happineſs* we muſt contribute nothing of our own. The *good Fortune* of Mankind is by no means the *Workmanſhip* of his *Reaſon*.

DIALOGUE V.

Upon Perfection.

MELPOMENE *the Muſe of* Tragedy, *and* URANIA *the Muſe of* Aſtronomy.

URANIA.

AH! You would be infinitely more *Charming*, did you not make it ſo much your Buſineſs to pleaſe: Are you not appris'd, that there is a ſort of Coquetry in expreſſing your ſelf, ever as you do in poetical Periods?

MELPOMENE.

Is it a Failing to endeavour to pleaſe? And do you think that *Truth* can ſo eaſily diſpenſe with that *agreeable* turn I give it?

URANIA.

That is to ſay, *Truth* muſt neceſſarily be ſupported by *Error*.

MEL-

MELPOMENE.

How, ſupported! She cannot be without it. It is to *Fiction* ſhe is indebted for all her *Merit*. Conſider *Eloquence*, which is a ſort of Poetry, what a Number of extravagant Figures is ſhe not oblig'd to *Uſe*, and all generally in favour of *Truth*.

URANIA.

But *Eloquence* at leaſt is diſengag'd from that *Captivity*, to which *Rime* is condemn'd.

MELPOMENE.

Yes, but *Eloquence* has its *Meaſure* and *Cadence*, as well as *Poetry*.

URANIA.

Ah! that *Conſtraint*, *Urania*, to which *Eloquence* reſigns her ſelf, when ſhe deſigns to tickle the Ears of her *Audience*, does not in the leaſt Prejudice her *Accuracy* or *Vigor*. She affects the Heart, when ſhe thinks proper, and we have ſeen her more than once Entertain the *Imagination*,

with as handſome *Spectacles* as you was ever able to do: *Her* bold *Career* is not ſtopp'd by a trifling *Ranging of Words*; and this *Liberty*, when employ'd in the Service of *Eloquence*, reflects upon Reaſon the pureſt Light. The caſe is quite different with Poetry. *A Barren Rime* extinguiſhes its brighteſt Flame; and the moſt precious Idea is ſometimes a Sacrifice to a Word which will not agree in Sound.

MELPOMENE.

It's in this that the Nicety of Poetry conſiſts.

URANIA.

It is that rather which is the Scandal of *Reaſon*. It ſeems, as if Men, little ſatisfy'd with the Honour acquir'd by the Diſcovery of *Truth*, were willing to heighten their Glory by the difficulty they affected in expreſſing it. Would one not be apt to ſay, that the *Familiarity* they had contracted with her had put 'em out of Humour?

MEL-

MELPOMENE.

No. Men rarely find her, and yet eſteem her little; they were never obſerv'd to be very curious in their Views. They deſire only ſuch as are *agreeable*. I ſay further, Nothing has been ſo diſadvantageous to *Truth*, as that *Air* which is *Natural* to her. In what variety of *Ornaments* are we not forc'd to diſguiſe her, to cover that *Dryneſs* which is wove in her Conſtitution? Wonderful thing! *Human Underſtanding*, which ſeems created for her, ſeems inclin'd to diſown her. Who knows this better than you, *Siſter?* The *Sciences* alone, over which you preſide, have *Truth* for their *Object*. Yet, how few engage in their Study; but this unhappy Contempt of *Sciences* is owing to the *Truth* that attends 'em.

URANIA.

Beſides the *Truth*, which is their peculiar Allotment, they enjoy likewiſe the ſole Privilege of being *Uſeful*. Was not the Diſcovery of the

Stars owing to the *Sciences*, which we did not make with Deſign they ſhould be perceiv'd by Men. It is by their Aſſiſtance, that they have learn'd to croſs with ſo great Facility the moſt ſpacious Seas. In ſhort, we find, that by force of Application they rob us every Day of ſome Secret or other.

MELPOMENE.

But why do you complain of the Neglect you meet with? Your *Sciences* afford no Entertainment, and Mankind affects *Joy* and *Pleaſure*. *Abſtracted Sciences* are *Uſeful*, and are eſteem'd: Thoſe which are my *Province*, are agreeable, and conſequently belov'd.

URANIA.

You will grant at leaſt, that mine are the moſt *Perfect*.

MELPOMENE.

Why ſhould you deſire that Conceſſion? It is not really true; and if either of us ſhould carry it in point of

of *Perfection*, methinks the Preference is owing to me, the Sciences over which I preſide have peculiar Graces: Yours have bare *Utility* on their ſide.

URANIA.

You give *Perfection* a pleaſant *Riſe*.

MELPOMENE.

She has however no other. *A thing is more or leſs Perfect, in proportion to that Relation of Conveniency ſhe maintains with us.*

URANIA.

Upon that Foot, the *Perfections* would imply only what we feel occaſionally from *Objects*, or what we wiſh to find them, and not what they really are in themſelves. *What!* when I ſhall ſee a Perſon excel in *Goodneſs*, ſhall not that *Perfection* belong to him, and denote only the Pleaſure I conceive of finding it in a Diſpoſition agreeable to my ſelf?

MEL-

MELPOMENE.

Yes, Perfection is a Sentiment of the Soul, which honours any Object with a fine Name, when it poſſeſſeth thoſe Qualities of which ſhe ſtands in need.

DIALOGUE VI.

If it be a well grounded Maxim, that the Honour of Men depends upon the Conſtancy of their Wives.

VULCAN *and* MARS.

MARS.

THE *Sun* did you a very ill Office, when he gave you notice of what paſs'd betwixt *Venus* and *I.* You will allow, I ſuppoſe, that the ſight of your Wife in my Arms gave you terrible Emotions.

VULCAN.

Why do you fancy, I ſhould be ſo mortify'd at this *Adventure?*

MARS.

MARS.

How! Was not your *Vanity* wounded? And could you ſee me, without the utmoſt *Shagreen*, enjoy *Venus*'s Favours, in common with your ſelf?

VULCAN.

Why not? Take my Word for it, you could not have oblig'd me more. I grew too familiar with *Venus*'s Beauties. Her *Charms* were already a little in Diſgrace from the *Poſſeſſion*. You came the moſt ſeaſonably in the World to reſtore that *Vigor* and *Sprightlineſs* to my Heart which it was about loſing.

MARS.

I ſhould never have imagin'd it in my Power to have laid an Obligation upon you. The *Pleaſure* I had in gratifying you, ought to excuſe you from all Acknowledgments.

VULCAN.

Don't rally ſo much. You cou'd not have done me a greater *Honour*, than

than you did upon that very Occaſion. Could any thing *Charm* me more, than to find, by the *exceſſive* Pleaſure you diſcover'd, what Price you ſet upon a Bleſſing of which I had the *Propriety*, and which I cou'd always enjoy at my Will and Pleaſure? Ah! you muſt allow that the Favours you obtain'd from my Wife ſhould perſwade me to inhance their Value.

MARS.

It's true, the *Homages* I paid to *Venus* had wherewithal to flatter your Vanity. *Her Beauty* did not ſuffer any Deſires to ſpring in my *Heart* which were not ſubſervient to your *Glory*. Your *Glory* however requir'd that ſhe ſhould not have indulged 'em.

VULCAN.

Pray why? You might have queſtion'd my Happineſs, had you not experienc'd it your ſelf. It concerned me nearly in point of *Honour*, that you ſhou'd know the Extent of my *Pleaſures*.

MARS.

MARS.

You wou'd almoſt perſwade me, that the Advantage has been wholly on your ſide, but methinks there muſt ſtill have been ſome little Convenien-cy on mine.

VULCAN.

Shall I tell you my Opinion freely? I ſee nothing that can *reſult* to you from this very ſame Occaſion, which renders you ſo arrogant, but *Shame* and *Confuſion*. For in ſhort, the Steps we take in order to deprive another of his *Poſſeſſion*, plainly evince our want of that Ingredient of *Happineſs*. The meaſures you concerted for ſur-prizing the Virtue of *Venus*, were ſo many forc'd Proofs of my Felicity. They declar'd what was defective in yours.

MARS.

But at the ſame time, what Satiſ-faction don't we feel when by force of *Merit* we aſſume a Title to *Fa-vours*, which of right does not belong to us?

VULCAN.

VULCAN.

Ah! that ſort of *Title* is a very pleaſant one, which is grounded upon the *Caprice of the Fair*; and you lay a very weak Foundation for the *Pleaſures* of *Lovers*. As for us Husbands, we never form any *Deſires* which we are not ſure of *gratifying*. Have we a mind to Pleaſures? There are ever ſome that attend our *Leiſure*. The ſame Duty which obliges our Wives to indulge us, does not ſuffer them to refuſe us. I don't place in the Rank of other Advantages that of being diſengag'd from all grateful Returns. For in ſhort, they do us no Favour by making us happy, as they do you. We are ſo, becauſe we ought to be ſo.

MARS.

I am infinitely pleas'd to find you have ſo juſt a Notion of Things; I was extreamly afraid that *Venus*'s frequent *Sallies* had caus'd ſome Diſcompoſure in your Mind.

VULCAN.

VULCAN.

You need not fear. My *Notions* upon this Occaſion are as ſound as poſſible; and do you believe that I ever flatter'd my ſelf ſo much as to fancy *Venus*'s *Charms* were reſerv'd for me alone? *No.* This is not the Intention of *Nature.* She ſcatters here and there a pretty *Woman.* But the Number is very ſmall, for ſhe is a great *OEconomiſt:* She does not mean that any ſingle Perſon ſhould have the *Poſſeſſion*, her Favours are general. Nor indeed is it conſiſtent with Reaſon that ſo rare a thing as a *fine Woman* ſhould be the Portion of one Man alone, and be loſt to the reſt of the *Univerſe.*

MARS.

I don't ſee then what a Man gets, by being Husband to a pretty Wife.

VULCAN.

He has an Advantage however. Beſides the natural Right he has over her, he has ſtill another *Acquiſi-*

tion

tion by Marriage, which renders the Uſe of her *Beauties* more eaſie.

MARS.

I was only then enjoying my natural Right, when you caught me in the Net?

VULCAN.

For that Reaſon you ſaw that I did not ſay one Word. I was even glad that my Wife had ſo good a *Taſte*, and her *Diſloyalty* charm'd me. Will you believe me, if I tell you that I got a thouſand *Careſſes* by the Bargain, I found in her an *Air* of *Sprightlineſs* which ſhe never had before. I even fancy'd her more tender and engaging, whilſt ſhe was under this gentle diſpoſition, (for ſo had you tun'd her Heart) ſhe told me a thouſand ſoft things, which otherwiſe ſhe never would have ſaid. Credit me, *Husbands* owe greater *Obligations* to their *Wives Gallants* than they imagine. They carry off with them a pretty indulgent manner which they bring to their *Huſbands*,

bands, and employ agreeably in their Service.

MARS.

It's granted, your *Wives Gallants* oblige all you who are *Husbands*, but at the ſame time they diſhonour you.

VULCAN.

I cannot divine the Reaſon why; for how can we ſecure the Conſtancy of a *Wife*? And how is it poſſible for us *Husbands* to do what you Lovers cannot bring about? Let Women be *diſgrac'd* in *Gods* name, who defile their *Husbands* Beds, this appears reaſonable. But that a Man ſhould be puniſh'd for his *Wife's Diſloyalty*, this is what I cannot for my Life *conceive*.

MARS.

They muſt however, upon ſome Score or other, deſerve the *Ridicule* they ſuffer. The moſt extravagant *Prejudices* have ever ſome Foundation.

VULCAN

VULCAN.

Ah! *Husbands* are more unfortunate than other Men. They ſuffer *Diſgrace*, without ſo much as an ill Reaſon for the *Imputation*.

DIALOGUE VII.

Upon Politeneſs.

MARS *and* VENUS.

VENUS.

MUST I ever be ſubject to Reproaches upon the ſcore of your *Conduct?* And if the tender Concern I have for you, makes me accountable for your Failings, ought you not to think of correcting them? Nothing is ſo much talk'd of as your *Impoliteneſs*; *Juno* complain'd to me, that the laſt time you ſaw her get into her *Chariot*, you had not the good Breeding to offer your Hand; and I remember *Apollo* told me Yeſterday,

Yeſterday, that you paſs'd a whole Afternoon in Company with *Iſis* and *Diana*, without ſaying one gallant Thing, or taking any notice of their *Beauty*.

MARS.

Would not one ſwear, that I was made on purpoſe to be a *Gentleman Uſher to the Goddeſſes?* What if *Diana* appear'd to me no better than an affected *Prude?* I muſt go Forſooth in all haſte, proteſt that I never beheld any thing ſo *Handſome* in all my Life. Ah! I ſhall never bring my ſelf to it. I am too Sincere to be well-bred.

VENUS.

Pray, what has *Politeneſs* to do with *Diſſimulation?* A well-bred Man paſſeth for ſuch. Is there any Neceſſity for his *Diſſembling?*

MARS.

Yes, Charming Goddeſs. Politeneſs is a fine Name beſtow'd upon *Falſhood*, for convenient Vices have ever great

great *Titles*. Tell me, I pray you, what it is to be *Polite*? Is it not to profeſs to all Sorts of Perſons that we Love and Eſteem 'em, and that our whole Buſineſs is to find out Opportunities of doing 'em Service? Now I do maintain, that there is no Perſon, how good ſoever, who loves and eſteems the whole World, and is diſpoſed to oblige it. I'll wager, that whoever ſhall undertake to reduce the Diſcourſes of polite Perſons (I mean the Sincereſt of 'em all) to their juſt Weight and Meaſure, will find himſelf oblig'd to make an Abatement of three Parts in Four. You ſee then, that Falſhood will attend *Perſons* of the greateſt *Veracity* when they pretend to *Politeneſs*. Conſider now in what it conſiſts, and after you are acquainted with the Nature of the Quality, which is in ſo high Repute, judge then if it be worth my while to purchaſe it.

VENUS.

No matter. One muſt be *Polite*, tho' under the Neceſſity of being Falſe.

Polite-

Politeneſs is the Bond of *Society*: It was ſhe who ſhow'd me from the Top of *Olympus*, two *Authors praiſing each other, and two fair Nymphs embracing*; and is it not a Cuſtom wiſely eſtabliſh'd, that we ſhould ſeem to *Eſteem* where we moſt *Deſpiſe*?

MARS.

But would it not be much better to confeſs our Thoughts naturally, and diſcover our true *Diſpoſitions*, than to put our ſelves under the diſmal Neceſſity of being ever upon our Guard againſt each other?

VENUS.

No! This ſort of *Sincerity* would be attended with grievous Conſequences; and *Politeneſs* acted very wiſely in taking her Place; ſhe is of infinite better Uſe. I agree that *Politeneſs* impoſes upon Mankind, but never go about to diſpute this Matter with me, they are never ſo Gay and Eaſie, as when they are *Bubbles*. Did you never obſerve that their whole

whole Life ſpent in *Cheating*, and in being *Cheated*? They are ſo betwitch'd with this *Exerciſe*, that they have made a Virtue of *Politeneſs*, which to them is the Source both of *Errors* and *Pleaſures*.

MARS.

You are in the right, *Politeneſs* is the Source of *Error*. She is really one continued Lie; for Men do not only lie in their *Diſcourſe*, but in their *Behaviours*: And it is in the Manner of Behaviour that *Politeneſs* chiefly conſiſts. But this Quality, in ſpite of all Advantages which you pretend ſhe procures, does not fail of being very Dangerous; ſhe ſerves as a Mask to the Wickedneſs of Men, and they pay very dear ſometimes for the Pleaſure they enjoy in being deceiv'd.

VENUS.

Agreed. Politeneſs, by the Virtues ſhe Repreſents and of which Men are not really poſſeſs'd, makes 'em extract ſome Advantage out of Vices, which they keep

keep out of Sight, and apply to their own Uſe at the ſame time.

DIALOGUE VIII.

Upon Jealouſie and Inconſtancy.

JUNO *and* VENUS.

VENUS.

YOU ought, in my Opinion, to be aſham'd of being *Jealous* to ſo great a Degree; what *Misfortunes* have you not inflicted upon *Iſis*; and would one not ſwear ſhe had been guilty of that *Outrage*, wherewith *Jupiter* has treated your *Charms?*

JUNO.

What would you have me do? Is not the Sentiment of *Jealouſie* natural?

VENUS.

It is ſo. Nay more, it was given us for our Intereſts. It is an Expedi-

ent wherewith Nature gratifies us, for obtaining a *Good* in ſpite of thoſe who would diſpute the Prize with us, and for aiding us in its Defence, againſt thoſe who would raviſh it out of our Poſſeſſion.

JUNO.

Well then, I need no further Juſtification.

VENUS.

Pardon me. Nature, who warns us by Jealouſie to ſtand upon our Guards, requires that we ſhould keep her Favours ſecret, otherwiſe ſhe puniſheth us for our *Indiſcretion*. We ought to be *Jealous*, but not appear ſo, otherwiſe what was beſtow'd upon us for our Service, turns juſtly to our Prejudice. There is interwove in *Jealouſie* a ſort of *Diffidence* of our ſelves, which declares us unworthy of our Enjoyment. Moreover, we can't be jealous without diſcovering a Fear of loſing an Object, which both ſecures and ſtrengthens that Right of Conqueſt it had over us.

Jea-

Jealouſie, which proclaims the Exceſs of our *Paſſion*, never ſuffers the Lover to be in any Pain about our Eſcape, and we root out of his Heart the Soul of Love, I mean *Solicitude*.

JUNO.

But you are mighty well inſtructed in theſe Affairs, and argue methinks very well upon them.

VENUS.

You would not do much amiſs, wou'd you look a little deeper into theſe ſame Matters. *Coquetry* is abſolutely more Neceſſary for the engaging of a Husband's Heart, than that of a Gallant.

JUNO.

But pray, ſuppoſing I had been as Errant a *Coquette* as your ſelf, would this have prov'd any *Guaranty* againſt *Jupiter*'s Inconſtancy; No, no, I was his Wife.

VENUS.

It is true, you was mightily to blame in that Particular; you might however have ſuſtain'd his Conſtancy, and adjourn'd a little his *Infidelity*. In ſhort, ſuppoſe you ſhould have ſeen him Fickle, who cou'd have hinder'd you from being Falſe? Had you not the ſame Reaſons for changing as *He*; *The Natural Reaſon for Inconſtancy*? And did he not furniſh us himſelf with that of *Revenge*, which juſtify'd you abundantly? Ah! to tell the Truth of the Matter, *Mortal Women* don't loſe ſo much time as you do, in queſt of Reaſons to juſtifie their Inconſtancy.

JUNO.

Ah! when we have once conceiv'd ſome tender Sentiments for an Object, methinks there is a ſort of Injuſtice in ſuppreſſing them.

VENUS.

You argue weakly; Conſtancy, take my word for it, is a very ridiculous

Quality, and has nothing in it that is glorious. She brings the Soul into a ſort of *Captivity*. Is it not the ſame *Object*, that diſpoſes ever of our *Happineſs*? As for my Part, I ſhould be very ſorry to have my *Enjoyments* limited by the *Caprice* of others.

JUNO.

Can we be ſaid to depend upon an *Object*, by adhering to it, whilſt it has new Pleaſures in Store for us?

VENUS.

It is very certain that *Conſtancy* is a great Failing, ſhe denotes a Proportion betwixt our *Deſires* and their *Object*. Does not a *conſtant Heart* confeſs that there are ſome certain Bounds, beyond which it cannot paſs; whilſt the *Inconſtant* one does Evidence, by the Succeſſion of its Deſires, nothing is capable of filling or worthy of gratifying it? Beſides, Conſtancy does almoſt ever imply Weakneſs and Inſenſibility in a Heart; it adheres generally to one Object, for no other Reaſon than becauſe it

wants Strength to run after others. For indeed what Advantage can we find in being *Conſtant*? And does not every Body know that new Objects only are capable of inſpiring new Life and Vigour?

JUNO.

It cannot be deny'd, but that you ever courted ſuch extreamly.

VENUS.

It was my Duty. *Inconſtancy* is a ſort of diſtributive *Juſtice*. Each amiable *Object* deſerve its particular *Tribute*, and is paid by *Inconſtancy*.

JUNO.

If you go on at this rate, you will in a ſhort time have practis'd all the Virtues. You are already become the juſteſt Perſon in the World.

VENUS.

I ſhall take the liberty to aſſure you likewiſe that I am very *knowing*, and that I can penetrate admirably into the Deſigns of Nature. It is her

her Pleaſure that we ſhould be *Inconſtant*. This is plainly ſeen by that furious *Propenſity* ſhe has given us all to change; is it not this reſtleſs Deſire which exerting it ſelf above all the *Paſſions*, ſcatters that *Variety* in the Univerſe which is its chief Ornament, and gives Society all that Perfection of which ſhe is capable? Is it not alſo to this Inclination ever upon the wing that we owe that perpetual Agitation, which delivers us from an Irkſomneſs ready to ſeize the Heart, when it has nothing more to Deſire? *Inconſtancy*, by the Motions ſhe beſtows, is the *Supplement* of *Happineſs*, and we borrow from her the beſt manner of *enjoying* it, which conſiſts in the Purſuit. We add farther, that *Inconſtancy*, whilſt ſhe enhances the Happineſs of each particular Perſon, contributes alſo to that of the *Publick*; it is Nature's cuſtom, at the ſame time ſhe confers a Benefit upon one, to make it ſubſervient to the Intereſt of another.

DIALOGUE IX.

Upon Heroiſm.

MINOS *and* RHADAMANT.

MINOS.

I Surpris'd the other Day *Achilles* and *Therſites* upon the point of quarrelling.

RHADAMANT.

It is very ridiculous to quarrel here.

MINOS.

Oh, the dead, how dead ſoever, have much ado to live amicably together.

RHADAMANT.

Pray what could the cowardly *Therſites* object againſt the valiant *Achilles?*

MI-

MINOS.

He pretended to have merited, better than the other, the Name of a great Man; he added too, that he hop'd to find the Juſtice here which had been refus'd him upon *Earth*. That after all, he was not ſurpriz'd at the *Wrong* had been done him, and that it was a Priviledge entail'd upon the *Living* to argue Inconſiſtently upon every Subject. Afterwards he ſuſtain'd, that *Valour*, ſuch as was expected in *great Men*, was a ſort of ſtupid *Ferocity*. He ſaid, if I remember well, that *great Men* ran without reſerve into Danger, only becauſe they were not ſenſible of it; that, for Example, they expos'd themſelves to Death, only becauſe the ſight of Death did not make that Impreſſion upon them which it really ought. But that a *Coward* had more *Reaſon* about him, was poſſeſt of *Delicacy* enough to apprehend Danger, and Prudence enough to ſave himſelf by *running away*.

RHADAMANT.

Well; and what did the great *Achilles* anſwer to all this?

MINOS.

He was mightily ſhock'd, to find himſelf ſtripp'd in an inſtant of all his *Glory*. He told me, that it ſhould not be permitted to attack *Heroes* in that manner; that the Number, which already is very ſmall, would diminiſh ſtrangely, if they were not more reſpected than they have been. I made *Therſites* immediately hold his Tongue, knowing very well what Occaſion there was for thoſe ſort of *Gentlemen*.

RHADAMANT.

But let *Therſites* ſay what he pleaſes; is not *Valour really a Virtue*?

MINOS.

I don't know whether it be or no! but let that Matter be as it will, ſhe raiſes her ſelf upon the Ruin of a great many others; it is the Fate of *ſhining Qualities* to be counterpois'd by Defects.

RHA-

RHADAMANT.

How? Can't one make an Aquiſition of ſome one Virtue, *without contracting a Vice* at the ſame time.

MINOS.

You have ſaid it. Nay, the very *Qualities* of the Mind are ever Battelling, and one can't be poſſeſt of One, but at the Expence of Another: But let us return to the Topick of *Valour*. Does ſhe not exclude *Senſibility*, and *Prudence*, which never admits of oppoſing *Danger* by Force, if it is to be avoided by *Artifice* and *Addreſs*.

RHADAMANT.

But to conclude, a Hero may be compos'd out of a Mixture both of Virtues and Vices. Since you will have it, that they are nearly ally'd.

MINOS.

Agreed; but it does not dear as you imagine to be coſt

a

Man. Are you well acquainted with the Compoſition of theſe fine Gentlemen? They are Mortals under the *Dominion* of ſtrong *Paſſions*, and who by *violent Commotions* are excited to extraordinary *Undertakings*, and which other Men dare not attempt. If theſe briſk Movements puſh 'em by good Fortune upon *Actions beneficial* to *Society*, and which conſequently are *ſtyl'd Virtuous*, they paſs inſtantly for *great Men.* But on the other ſide, ſhou'd the ſame *Agitations* diſpoſe them to *Actions* detrimental to the *Publick*, they paſs for as great *Villains. Great Men* contribute very rarely any thing of their own to the *Character*, wherewith they are inveſted.

DIALOGUE X.

In order to be Happy, one muſt not enquire too narrowly into the Nature of the Paſſions.

MERCURY *and* CALLIOPE.

MERCURY.

I Did not take you to be ſo handſome as you really are, I always imagin'd to my ſelf, that you and your Siſters had reſign'd entirely to the other *Goddeſſes*, the *Merit* of *Beauty*; and it would have been but a ſort of Juſtice to have done ſo. Are you not already ſufficiently recommendable by the Excellency of your *Underſtanding*?

CALLIOPE.

Well: But is it poſſible to enjoy too many good Qualities?

MER-

MERCURY.

What do you pretend to? It would prove, I am ſure, of great Moment to me to ſee you leſs amiable. Your *Beauty*, the other Day, made ſtrange Impreſſions on my Heart; and I found my ſelf oblig'd to ſummon the moſt ſerious *Reflections* to ſuppreſs a *Growing Paſſion*.

CALLIOPE.

My *Virtue*, no Queſtion, diſcourag'd you; and you did not care to run the Riſque of ſeeing your *Deſires* baffled.

MERCURY.

No, I aſſure you. *Virtue* is very well known amongſt us *Gods*, and we have no Apprehenſions about her.

CALLIOPE.

What than was capable of ſtopping your Career?

MER-

MERCURY.

I thought you had too much *Wit*, and of that ſort too which is Rational. This Conſideration only kept me from ſetting my Heart upon you.

CALLIOPE.

I don't comprehend your Meaning. *Wit*, in my Opinion, is a *Quality* one would be glad to find in the Perſon *belov'd*; and the want of it was ever a diſadvantageous *Imputation*.

MERCURY.

So much the worſe. *Wit*, and above all that of *Reflection*, does not ſit well upon *Love*. It is there entirely miſplac'd. It is ever pretending to let us into a world of Secrets, which we had better know nothing of. As for Example: Suppoſing I was in Love with you, I muſt come according to Cuſtom, and ſwear to be eternally Conſtant; at the ſame time pretending to make the *Actual* Diſpoſition of my *Heart* be bound for the good Behaviour

haviour of thoſe Inclinations I ſhall entertain hereafter. But this is not the worſt of the Matter. When I ſhould return with Deſign to ſet off my Paſſion to the beſt Advantage, and repleat with the moſt tender Sentiments I ſhould promiſe to ſerve you to the utmoſt of my Power; what a Jeſt would you make of your humble Servant? and endeavour to ſhew by *Reaſon* and *Inſtances* that nothing is ever done for the ſake of the Perſon belov'd, and not allowing by any means the *Diſintereſtedneſs* of my *Love*, you would prove *Malicious* enough to undervalue all thoſe coſtly Sacrifices I ſhould offer to your *Charms*. Conſider a little, pray, if this Commerce of ours would not prove a very cold one, and of what Uſe your *Wit* would be upon this Occaſion?

CALLIOPE.

Upon this Foot indeed, there is no great Advantage in having *Wit*.

MER-

MERCURY.

No, certainly; and eſpecially that ſort of *Wit* which employs it ſelf in examining the *Paſſions*. We ought to reſt ſatisfy'd with the Senſe of their Impulſe: We are undone, when we enter into their *Natures*. Conſider *Pſiche*. She had a Mind to know what *Love* was. However, *Love* had charg'd her to remain in perfect Ignorance with regard to himſelf. What was the Conſequence of her not taking his Advice? ſhe loſt all Senſe of *Pleaſure*. We are all of the ſame *Mould* as *Pſiche*. We are not ſatisfy'd with being *Happy*. We are eager to know how we come to be ſo, who would not aſſert, that we were afraid that *Nature* ſhould miſguide us, and were willing to light her on her *Way*. Is it not juſt that we ſhould ſuffer for our Preſumption; and that the Forfeiture of our *Pleaſures*, ſhould Revenge her upon our *Diffidence*.

CAL-

CALLIOPE.

But at the ſame time, why did *Nature* make us ſo *Curious?*

MERCURY.

Well then, let us employ our *Underſtanding* upon things indifferent, and let us in this manner only pay that Tribute of *Curioſity* which Nature exacts from us.

CALLIOPE.

Ah! indifferent Things bear no Proportion to the extent of *our Underſtanding.*

Alas, why did Nature, in giving us Paſſions which were ſufficient to render us Happy, give us Reaſon which will not ſuffer us to be ſo?

DIALOGUE XI.

Upon Sloth.

HERCULES *and* MORPHEUS.

MORPHEUS.

WELL then, it was you, Senior *Hercules*, who put the whole Earth into Fear and Trembling.

HERCULES.

It's certainly ſo. I was ſufficiently miſchievous when I ſet my ſelf about it, I kill'd all the Monſters I met with, *I rid the World of Thieves.* In ſhort, never *Mortal* did ſuch things as I. For this Reaſon did *Jupiter* judge me worthy of *Heaven.* To tell you the truth of the Matter, I have ſcarce yet had leiſure to recollect my ſelf. I have been ever engag'd in drinking of *Nectar*, to divert the fatigue of my *Labours.* In truth, this ſame Trade of a *Hero* is attended with exceſſive hard *Duty.*

MOR-

MORPHEUS.

I grant it. But you took care ſometimes to reſt your ſelf. For Example, you had leiſure to take Breath when with *Omphale*: You paſs'd a good reaſonable Portion of time in Spinning with her.

HERCULES.

This Imputation lay very hard upon me, yet I can tell whence it proceeded. How! becauſe a Man is a *Hero*, it ſhall not be allow'd him to have any Senſibility about him; conſider a little this fine way of Reaſoning.

MORPHEUS.

You muſt give the World leave to talk; for my Part, I think that to have been the time you employ'd to the beſt Purpoſe: What Buſineſs had you to go and kill the poor Monſters, which did not ſay one word to you? You had done much better to have ſpent your Life deliciouſly with a pretty Lady.

HER-

HERCULES.

That was not however the fineſt Scene of my Life, and I am ſenſible that this Circumſtance has a little eclips'd my *Honour*. It had prov'd much more *Glorious* to enter Heav'n pure, and exempt from humanFrailties.

MORPHEUS.

Hear me. I am the God of *Sloth*, and what I am about to tell you may raiſe a little Prejudice in you, but the Intereſt I have in maintaining my Cauſe ſhould not be a reaſon for making it loſe any part of its Goodneſs. *Ambition*, which has been your *darling Paſſion*, does not reflect ſo much Honour (as one is apt to believe) upon thoſe who ſuffer themſelves to be poſſeſs'd by her. She diſcovers the Neceſſity in which they ſtand of other People, and puts 'em under an Engagement of Sacrificing themſelves to the *Caprice* of their *Opinion*. *Sloth* has ſomething more noble in its Nature, ſhe does not ſuffer her

her *Votaries* to be ſubject to any *Dependence.*

HERCULES.

Ah. She is an hateful thing, don't ſpeak one Word of your *Sloth.*

MORPHEUS.

You don't yet underſtand what it is, and I am ready to tell you ſomething much more extraordinary, and which notwithſtanding I look upon to be true.

Idleneſs is the ſole Quality that deſerves the Name of *Virtue*, and includes *Perfection. That Situation* in which Idleneſs leaves us, ſhows that we are ſuch as we muſt be, in order to be *Happy.* The Soul in effect never fixeth her *Diſpoſitions*, but when ſhe has Reaſon to reſt ſatisfy'd. She could ſoon think of removing, did ſhe not find her ſelf eaſie in her preſent *Condition.*

See *Jupiter*, he wants nothing *Foreign* to ſupport his *Felicity.* He continues in the State where the Priviledge of his *Eſſence* plac'd him. Allot

lot him *Motion*; ſuppoſe him *reſtleſs*; you could no longer eſteem him *Sovereignly* perfect. *Sloth* is the only *Quality* of the *Soul* which can diſcover any trace of *Excellency and Perfection in its Natute.*

HERCULES.

But all that Men call Virtue is ever at War with *Idleneſs.*

MORPHEUS.

Nay, the *Virtues* themſelves imply Imperfection; they make us ever aſpire to ſome thing which we have not, and by this means become ſo many Proofs of our *Indigencies.*

HERCULES.

Well then, if we want any thing, *the Paſſions* are ſure to ſupply us; do *they* not make us *Happy*?

MORPHEUS.

Yes: They fain would make us happy, and frequently do not. But *Sloth* ſuppoſes us ever to be ſo.

DIA-

DIALOGUE XII.

Upon Friendſhip.

MOMUS *and* POLLUX.

POLLUX.

AH! All that Heav'n contains of what is engaging to Mortals, bears no Proportion to the *Charms* of *Friendſhip*; and I could reſign to *Jupiter* the Gift of an Immortality, were I not allow'd to ſhare it with my dear *Caſtor*.

MOMUS.

Here's a World of *Eloquence*, to ſet off a meer *Chimera*.

POLLUX.

What! You call that a *Chimera*, which is the moſt delicious Ingredient of Life? How greatly do I pity you, for not being acquainted with the

the Pleaſures of a perfect Friendſhip! What Tranſports attend the Heart which can diſcharge it ſelf into that of its Friend! Here it is that *Pleaſures* ſpring up with freſh Vigor. Here it is that our Troubles kindly divided loſe their Force. Exempt from *Love's* Caprices, *Friendſhip* does ſometimes feel his *Joys*; and, becauſe ſhe is *diſcreet*, don't go about to believe, that ſhe is ever ſo *Inſipid* as is pretended.

MOMUS.

Well then, what do you infer? That *Friendſhip* is ſometimes an agreeable *Paſſion*? But is it the leſs a *Chimera* for all this? *Nature* in forming the *Heart* of Men caſt into it a *Seed* of *Hatred*, which renders them incapable of a *perfect Friendſhip*. Born all with the ſame *Rights* to thoſe good Things which *Nature* ſets before them, they become *Rivals*, and conſequently *Enemies*, according to the *Ardor* they feel of diſputing the *Prize* with each other. Behold now Mankind upon the Point of giving Bat-

tel, and going to extirpate it ſelf as ſoon as created. No. Men, Ambitious, but Wiſe, conclude amongſt themſelves a ſort of *Peace*. They agree for this *Purpoſe* to divide the *Benefits* of *Nature*. The *ſtrongeſt* ſet out the *Shares*, and allot to themſelves the beſt they can. The *weakeſt* without any formal Renunciation of their *Rights*, give them up however from *Neceſſity*. Here now is the *Diviſion* of all *good Things* made. And Mankind oblig'd to live together. But under this Neceſſity, they would fain live *agreeably*. To this end they endeavour to ſtifle thoſe *Impulſes* which encourage them to *Rebel*; becauſe it is neceſſary for their common Welfare to maintain inviolably the *Treaty* of *Peace*. For a Mark of *Reconciliation*, they give on both ſides all poſſible *Aſſurances* of *Goodwill* and *Affection*. They proceed ſometimes ſo far as to *impoſe* upon themſelves; and the Neceſſity of wearing the *Maſque* of *Friendſhip*, perſwades 'em ſometimes that they poſſeſs its *Sentiments*. But upon the firſt *Emergency*,

gency, the *Heart* betrays it ſelf, and diſcovers the Principle of *Self-love*.

POLLUX.

I ſhall deny nothing of what you have advanc'd. We hold from *Nature* a *Sentiment* which makes us refer all to our own Intereſt. Being invincibly diſpos'd by the Movements of our *Hearts* to the Enjoyment of every *Bleſſing*, we all contend for the ſame; and the *Univerſe* does not ſeem too big for our *Deſires*. But at the ſame time may I not aſſert, that *Nature*, which has beſtow'd one *Sentiment* upon us, contriv'd on purpoſe for our own Uſe, and which has Reference to us alone; did likewiſe inſpire us with one, which has for Object the *Advantage* of others? For whoſe ſake, pray, was made the *Sentiment* of that *Glory*, which never accrues to us till after our *Deceaſe*, and which we can by no Means *enjoy*? I am ſenſible that the *Foreſight* of *future Applauſe*, is one ſort of *Enjoyment*. Nor is it indeed juſt, that we ſhould be ever offering up *Sacrifices*,

and obtain nothing in *Return*. *Nature* has took care to fix a *Reward* to all we do for other People. But this ſame *Glory* has no regard to them, ſince *Self-love*, which underſtands perfectly well its own Intereſt, would not think of neglecting all thoſe *Advantages*, which it might enjoy during a long Succeſſion of *Years*, for the ſake of that which it can enjoy but for an Inſtant, and which ſometimes puts a Period to its Being. Have we not had Examples of Men laying down their Lives for their *Friends*? What can reſult to *Self-love*, that is capable of Rewarding them for ſo great Services? How many Lovers have *ſacrific'd* themſelves to their *Miſtreſſes*? Did they hope after Death to reap any Advantage from ſuch an *Offering*? What Relief do we daily give to the *Unhappy*, from whom no *Service* or *Acknowledgments* are expected? And yet, if *Self-love* be the only Principle of our *Actions*, why don't we ſuffer theſe Wretches to die? We ſhould by theſe means have fewer Competitors, and our Share

Share of the *Poſſeſſions* of the Earth would become greater.

MOMUS.

I acquieſce, and do allow that the *Sentiment* which does refer all to our Intereſts, is corrected by another, which conſiders thoſe of other People.

POLLUX.

Nature did not reſt ſatisfy'd with theſe two *Sentiments*; ſhe has likewiſe conferr'd a third upon us, which reſpects neither us, nor others: But has for *Object* the care of her *Work*. And the Execution of her Deſigns. It's her Pleaſure, for Example, that Men ſucceeding each other ſhould repleniſh a *Globe* which ſhe deſires ſhould be inhabited. She engages us to concur with her in her Deſigns, by an *Attractive* of *Pleaſure* to which we are not able to reſiſt. This is what ſhe has done for the Propagation of the *Species*. It is her Pleaſure likewiſe, that we ſhould fill up a certain *Courſe* of *Years*; and

whereas our Strength is ever upon the Decay, ſhe has ordain'd that we ſhould recruit it by a *Sentiment* which rewards our *Obedience*. What is moſt remarkable is, that ſhe has annex'd to us *Neceſſities*, more or leſs, in Proportion to the Intereſt ſhe has in putting us upon *Action*.

MOMUS.

Very well. You diſtinguiſh three Sorts of *Sentiments* wherewith *Nature* has inſpir'd *Mankind*. The firſt Regards their own particular *Good*. The ſecond tends directly to the Advantage of the Publick, and reverts afterwards to private Intereſt; becauſe, ſay you, *Nature* does not require that we ſhould ſerve her for Nothing. Nature has conſtituted a third, for the Conſervation of her *Works*, and the Accompliſhment of her *Deſigns*. As far as I ſee, the *Sentiment* of *Friendſhip*, which makes the Subject of our Converſation, is of the ſecond Claſs; and you ſaid, if I miſtake you not, that it was deſign'd to correct the *Sentiment* of *Self-love*, which

which being puſh'd to its utmoſt Extent, would become fatal to *Society*. So that the *Sentiment* of *Friendſhip* ſuppoſes that of *Self-love*. It's plain then by your own Confeſſion that *perfect Friendſhip* is a meer *Chimera*, and after all, you muſt unavoidably agree, that ſuppoſing we love others, we love our ſelves much better.

POLLUX.

I grant it. Neither is *perfect Friendſhip neceſſary*. It is however convenient we ſhould aſpire to it, notwithſtanding the ſlender Diſpoſition we have to attain it.

MOMUS.

I underſtand you. The *Sentiments* which *Nature* confers upon us, are deſtin'd, how oppoſite ſoever they ſeem, to *agree* in a certain Manner amongſt themſelves, which conſtitutes the *Perfection* of her *Work*. Diſtinct *Liquors* have ſometimes *uſeleſs*, and frequently *dangerous Qualities*. Let 'em be mix'd, and they acquire ſuch as are *Uſeful*.

DIALOGUE XIII.

That Imperfections ſometimes are ſubſervient to our Pleaſures.

DIANA, VENUS, *and* MOMUS.

VENUS.

GOddeſs you do not deſerve to be ſo handſome as you are, and ſo many *Graces* were never given you, to ſet up for *Wiſdom*. *Beauty* is a Power given by *Nature* to make its *Votaries miſerable*, but ſhe wou'd not have it abus'd.

DIANA.

It's wonderfully agreeable to be prais'd upon the ſubject of *Beauty*, by her who is the *Goddeſs* of it. But methinks thoſe *Praiſes* which you have refus'd to my *Wiſdom* wou'd have appear'd more *Natural*.

VENUS.

Ah! don't expect from me any *Encomiums* upon your *Wiſdom*. *Beauty* is a *Bleſſing* of which we have the *Propriety* for no other purpoſe but to make *Uſe* of it; and if you pleaſe to reflect, you will find your *Wiſdom* is a down right *Avarice*. Why are we *handſome*, is it not to make *Lovers*? And why make *Lovers*, but to make ſo many happy *Slaves*?

DIANA.

A world of *Obligation* is due to you for that *Motive* which inclines you to renounce all *Virtue*. But that ſort of *Generoſity* with which you do your ſelf ſo much Honour, that impatient deſire of conferring *Happineſs*, occaſions a world of *Ingratitude*. For indeed what *Value* is ſet upon a *fine Perſon* who is laviſh of her *Charms*? A *Bleſſing* when it ceaſes to be rare, ceaſes to be *deſirable*. And thoſe *Favours* which are not attended with *Diſtinction*, can no longer ſooth our *Vanity*.

VENUS.

But in ſhort, when we have done all in our Power to make the World *eaſie*, we lye under no further Obligation, and have done our Duty. And beſides, it is a conſtant Truth, that what Exceſs ſoever we are guilty of in granting *Favours*, it is however preferrable to that ſenſeleſs *Barbarity* which you practiſe upon others, and what is worſe, upon your ſelf.

DIANA.

Ah! it's this *Barbarity* which does us *Honour*.

VENUS.

Now is this inconceivable to me, and there is a *Whimſicalneſs* in Mens *Ideas*, which I can't account for. They have annex'd *Glory* to the *Services* they do each other. A *Conqueror* who courts *Dangers*, and ſacrifices his Life, is loaded with *Glory*. A *Virtuoſo*, who after having made one uſeful *Diſcovery*, renounces ev'ry thing

thing that bears the Name of *Pleaſure*, receives from Men all poſſible Applauſe. A fair *Toaſt* who would imitate theſe Gentlemen, and be ſerviceable to the *Publick* to the utmoſt of her Power, preſently loſes her *Reputation*: A pleaſant thing indeed! the Glory of Men conſiſts in being ſubſervient to the *publick Welfare*; and the Glory of Women, which is call'd *Honour*, conſiſts in refuſing it all Aid and Aſſiſtance.

MOMUS.

May I without Offence, *fair Goddeſſes*, take Part in your *Converſation*?

DIANA.

With all my Heart; and I deſire you will be Arbiter in the *Difference* between us. We were engag'd in the *Defence* of our *Conduct*; and according to Cuſtom, we each of us maintain'd our *own* to be the beſt. *Venus* pretended I ſhou'd yield to her, becauſe ſhe averr'd that ſhe was of greater *Uſe* to the World than I. And that no Bodies Conduct being

eſtimable

eſtimable but as it produc'd ſome advantage, it was ridiculous in me to think of bringing my ſelf into *Competition* with her.

MOMUS.

Venus is in the wrong, but at the ſame time you are not altogether in the right; there is ſomething to be ſaid againſt the Conduct both of the one and the other. You for your part are too wiſe, and *Venus* is not enough ſo.

DIANA.

What's that you ſay? Is it poſſible to be too *Wiſe?*

MOMUS.

Yes. *Wiſdom* was created only for the *Correction* of *Vice*, which is its *Oppoſite*, and to qualifie it as far as is convenient. A *Wiſdom* ſo very *rigid* does by no means agree with the taſte of *Mankind*. And how ſhould it? ſhe ſtands ever in Oppoſition to their Deſigns.

DIA-

DIANA.

Momus wou'd pervert me; but he is *Gallant*, and wou'd juſtifie *Venus*.

VENUS.

Let us give Ear to *Momus*, and let both the one and the other diveſt our ſelves of all that is ſuperfluous, in order to become *deſirable*. It does not always happen that ſhe who has the greateſt Merit is for that Reaſon the moſt agreeable. There are *ſhining Qualites* which we eſteem, and which tire us; and we murmur ſometimes againſt certain *Defects* which touch us with *Pleaſure*, and which we ſhould be ſorry to let paſs unobſerv'd, did we underſtand our own Intereſt. The truth of the Matter is, that an agreeable thing becomes more ſo when it is united after a certain manner to its Oppoſite, and it ſeems to me that Virtue in order to exert it ſelf to the beſt Advantage, has occaſion for an Allay of *Vice*; as Truth ſhines the brighter when confronted with Falſhood.

DIA-

DIANA.

This can never be: For according to your Reaſoning, the *Vices* wou'd become as neceſſary as the *Virtues*; and there is no Probability of there being any Occaſion for the *Vices* after all the care that is taken of crying them down.

DIALOGUE XIV.

That the Reputation of a great Wit *is frequently an Obſtacle to the Succeſs of a* Lover.

MARS *and* APOLLO.

APOLLO.

HOW comes it, *God of War*, that I am ſo ill treated by *Love*? I ſcarce ever made an *Addreſs* in my Life in which I was not defeated: Do you remember how I was received by *Daphne*? And yet, methinks,

I have nothing about me which ſhou'd oblige a fair Nymph to flie me.

MARS.

Very far from it, you are perfectly *amiable*, your Hair is the fineſt in the *World*, your Shape is *exquiſite*, and we have no Body here that is comparable to you in point of *Beauty*. I don't mention a thouſand other Advantages you are poſſeſs'd of, as playing upon the *Lute*, and your Skill in *Poetry*.

APOLLO.

Alas! all theſe *Graces* that go into the Compoſition of a *deſirable Lover* did never procure me one poor *Coquette*: And you, who never trouble your Head about one ſingle agreeable Quality, have found means to get into *Favour* with the moſt beautiful of our *Goddeſſes*.

MARS.

This is matter of Fact.

A-

APOLLO.

The more I examine you, the leſs do I perceive that Merit which gave you the Preference in *Venus*'s good Graces before ſo many *Gods* who made their Court to her. You never paſs'd for a mighty *Well-bred Perſon*, and I believe you did not make it your Buſineſs to affect that tender manner which ſuſtain'd by *Aſſiduities* force a rebellious Heart to *ſurrender*. Yet *Love* and you reſemble each other in ſome Inſtances, and it is this which might have engag'd him to favour you. You no ſooner have made one Conqueſt, but you deſire to make another; and juſt ſo does *Love*: You occaſion a world of Confuſion as well as he, and ſometimes are in the ſame Cabal together. Witneſs the War of *Troy*, of which he was the Cauſe: Beſides, there is a ſort of *War* carry'd on in the *Affairs* of *Love*, where one Attacks, and the other Defends. As you have been us'd to form Attacks, you do it, no Queſtion; much better than any other Perſon.

MARS.

MARS.

I am tranſported to hear, that I ſo nearly reſemble *Love*. This will furniſh me with an Air of *Confidence*, which is by no means unbecoming in a *Gallant*. However, maugre this new Advantage which you have been pleaſed to confer upon me, it's my Opinion that it is much more agreeable to the Rules of good Senſe, that you ſhould be happy than I. The more I think, the leſs can I conceive, why you have been ſo ill us'd by *Daphne*; that Nymph was extreamly Difficult.

APOLLO.

Nor can I apprehend what could have drawn her Averſion upon me.

MARS.

Shall I let you into that Secret? You have a *Title* which we have not yet took notice of, this in my Opinion has done you ſome Prejudice. You are the *God* of the *Beaus Eſprits*; this *Quality*, how glorious ſoever, may

may very well have been the cauſe of the Injuſtice that has been done you. *Wit* ſeems to give the Perſon that poſſeſſeth it an *Air* of *Superiority*, which ſuits very little with the Temper of the *Fair Sex*. *Ladies* know that it has been time out of Mind *their Privilege* to *Rule* without *Controul*, and are Jealous of our deſigning to Invade an *Empire*, which they Imagine is due to their *Merit* only.

APOLLO.

It's a very ill grounded *Jealouſie*. *Beauty*, does ſhe not give a Power over all *Hearts*, which nothing is able to Diſpute with her? I ſhould deſire only *two fine Eyes* to confound the *Pride* of the *wittieſt Mortal living*, how vain ſoever.

MARS.

Yet you find by your own Example, that they are not much diſpoſed to *Love* great Wits; as for my Part, I believe that the *Fair* are ever upon the *Defenſive* with ſuch as you.

As

As *Wit* furniſhes the *Means* of *Deceiving*, they fear that a *Lover* well vers'd in the *Game* of the *Paſſions* ſhould impute his Succeſs to his own Art, and think his Enjoyments but a *Right* of *Conqueſt*. It is poſſible they may have the *Vanity* to believe, that a *Lover* could never be able to Triumph, did not they facilitate the *Victory*. To conclude, they are well enough ſatisfy'd to ſee their *Gallants happy*, but will not allow it to be ſaid, that they were obliged to ſurrender.

APOLLO.

It's really my Opinion, that a fine Lady cannot do a more glorious thing, than reſign her ſelf to a Man of Senſe. The *Merit* of her Lover protects her from the Scandal that attends a *Defeat*. *Women* know this very well, and they have ever been perſuaded, that nothing ſhould be ſpar'd to juſtifie their *Weakneſs*. For this Reaſon we ſee, that they are wonderfully Aſſiduous in extolling the *Qualifications* of their *Lovers*, nay they

they venture to give them *Attributes* which don't belong to them; and all this, no doubt, that they may have a more plauſible Excuſe for the loſs of their *Heart*.

MARS.

Very well. A *Belle* ſhou'd make choice of ſome illuſtrious *Lover*, whoſe unexceptionable *Merit* may remove all the Imputations of *Frailty*. *This Precaution* is a very *pertinent* one, but what is the Conſequence? If ſhe *Loves* ſhe cannot help diveſting her ſelf of her *Privileges*, and ſhe muſt neceſſarily by the Confeſſion of her *Paſſion* reſign to her *Lover* the rights of *Dominion*. He wiſely takes care to maintain his Power, nay ſometimes he exerts it too much; for in ſhort, a *Man of Wit* is in his kind as arrogant as any *Beauty* whatſoever. He is willing to be reveng'd of the *Tyranny* that was exercis'd over himſelf, to this Effect he takes the ſame Meaſures. He treats the *fair One* with a certain Air of *Victory*, with which ſhe has not the leaſt Reaſon to

to be ſatisfy'd: He ſuffers her moſt graciouſly to wear the *Title* of *Miſtreſs*, but ſeldom gives her the trouble of the *Function*. In a word, you may ſay what you pleaſe; but I am perſwaded that your *Wit* has done you no Service, nor any of the reſt of your *Talents*. They alarm'd *Daphne*, and made her ſtand upon her Guard, they ſhew'd her the *Perils* ſhe had reaſon to fear: Had you appear'd leſs *amiable* you might, it may be, have prov'd more *Happy*. The *Frailty* of her *Sex*, aſſiſted by Time, might have produc d what too *eager Inſtances* and *repeated Attacks* were not able to bring about. It does not always happen that when we preſs the moſt that we advance the fartheſt.

APOLLO.

Ah! when once we deſign to *carry* a *Heart*, we muſt attack it with *Vigour*; if it once diſcovers a Diſpoſition to hold out, we muſt remove all poſſibility of Relief, and carry the Place by force of Arms.

MARS.

MARS.

And were it not much better to wait with Patience 'till the *fair One* makes a Preſent of her *Heart*; the keeping whereof is ſo painful: without coming arm'd *Cap-a-pe* with *Merit*. Would it not be more pleaſurable to hold our *Happineſs* of the Perſon we *Love*?

APOLLO.

I don't know if this wou'd prove more *agreeable*, but I know at leaſt that it is much more ſure not to owe our *Pleaſures* to any Body but our ſelves, and to have acquir'd 'em by Aſſiduity.

MARS.

By this *Stroak* of *Vanity* you diſcover your ſelf to be a *great Wit*; however, if you are *Happy*, what ſignifies it to whom you are oblig'd for your *good Fortune*?

A-

APOLLO.

Oh! it concerns us nearly to be the Authors of our own *Felicity*; did we expect it from the natural *Frailty* of the *fair Sex*, that which conferr'd might as eaſily remove the Bleſſing. But wou'd we lay a laſting Foundation for our *Pleaſures*, let us contrive to attain them by the force of *Addreſs*. Then the *ſame Merit* which had the Power of obtaining the *Favour* will have that of making it laſting. Take my Word for it, the Sentiment of *Vanity* is not in this Occaſion as in a great many others, a Sentiment ſo ridiculous. That which appears to be the beſt concerted in *Vanity* conducts Men always to their Intereſt, and this ſide they hold of *Nature*. It's true *Vanity* does ſometimes induce them to commit great *Follies*, but then ſhe is not what ſhe ought to be, *Opinion* does ever infuſe into the *Paſſions* ſome *Foreign* Mixture which depraves 'em.

DIALOGUE XV.

Upon Hatred.

APOLLO *and* MINERVA.

MINERVA.

HOW! the Service that *Corvus* did you, could it deſerve the doleful Change of his *Plumage*? Are theſe the *Returns* that *Friendſhip* meets with and ought you ſo to have rewarded the *Ardor* he expreſs'd for your Service, in giving you notice of *Coronis*'s *Treaſon?*

APOLLO.

Ah! I cou'd never have puniſh'd him enough; what had I ever done to him that he ſhould deprive me of all my Pleaſures, and ſhou'd he not have left me in Poſſeſſion of an *Error* which was ſo dear to me. A pleaſing *Dream* cannot laſt too long, and the

the *Illuſion* we enjoy, is ſhe not as valuable as the *Bleſſing* we *poſſeſs*?

MINERVA.

But ſhou'd not the Uprightneſs of his Intention excuſe the ill Effects of his Zeal?

APOLLO.

Who knows if his Heart was not ſecretly pleas'd with the *Perfidiouſneſs* he diſcover'd? It's poſſible he had a Hand in the Treaſon, and came in ſome ſort to inſult me.

MINERVA.

Why, did you furniſh him with any Motives for ſo doing?

APOLLO.

Hark you. I know the *Malice* of *Man's Heart*. That *Grief* which ariſes from the *Troubles* of a *Friend* is furiouſly combated by the *ſecret Joy* we conceive in finding our ſelves exempt from thoſe *Evils* that oppreſs him.

MINERVA.

You rejoice much in having found a *Pretence* for your *Cruelty*.

APOLLO.

Have I occaſion for any other than my *Love*? *No*; I lov'd *Coronis* too much not to have treated her with *Barbarity*.

MINERVA.

That is to ſay, that the *Exceſs* of your *Tenderneſs* produc'd that of your *Revenge*, and you reſolv'd without the leaſt Remorſe to let her Die.

APOLLO.

What wou'd you have had me done? I loſt nothing in loſing *Coronis*; ſhe would not make me perfectly *Happy*, and I had no mind ſhe ſhould make another ſo.

MINERVA.

You may ſay what you pleaſe, but I am confident that you regretted the loſs of her very *Rigours*.

A-

APOLLO.

It's true, I had a mighty Inclination to ſee her, tho' I had been ſure of ſeeing her *Faithleſs*: I ſhou'd have had the Pleaſure of *hating* her.

MINERVA.

You mean of loving her. *Hatred* is a ſort of *Love* which diſcovers in him who feels it *Diſcontent*, and *Vivacity* at the ſame time. This Paſſion is ever attended by Love or Eſteem.

APOLLO.

But is there not a ſort of *Hatred* which implying neither *Love* nor *Eſteem*, does to the contrary adhere to *Perſons* whom we deſpiſe, and who we are ſure are acted by *Diſpoſitions* no ways agreeable to our own.

MINERVA.

Yes; but this ſort of *Hatred* is rare. The more *noble* ſort of *Hatred* falls upon ſuch as we *Eſteem*. I know it by my ſelf, when I puniſh'd *Arachne* who challeng'd me to en-

gage with her in a Trial of Skill, I hated her heartily, and eſteem'd her infinitely. All *Competitors* deſerve our Reſentment, we are ſure to hate thoſe who have the ſame *Talents* with our ſelves. We hate likewiſe a Friend of whom we have an eſſential Reaſon to complain; and how can we help it. His *Perfidiouſneſs* robs us of thoſe Pleaſures with which his Commerce ſupply'd us. An ungrateful or inconſtant *Miſtreſs* is exceſſively odious. The ungrateful *Miſtreſs* refuſes to make us Happy, the Inconſtant to continue us ſo. It's then that *Love* aſſociates himſelf in the *Heart* to *Scorn*, and we both *Love* and *Hate* furiouſly.

APOLLO.

But we fancy to our ſelves that when we *Hate* we entertain no other *Paſſion*.

MINERVA.

Wou'd we examine things to the bottom, we ſhou'd ſoon extricate our ſelves out of *Error*. All our Paſſions

ſions are compounded, and there is not one which is more ſo than that of *Hatred*. Very frequently two or three Paſſions whimſically match'd together determine us to Action, and it is generally that *Paſſion* which makes the leaſt for our Intereſt that has the Honour of the *Exploit*.

DIALOGUE XVI.

Upon Delicacy.

MARS *and* VENUS.

VENUS.

FROM the time I ſet my *Heart* upon you, I never found you ſo *Brutal* as the Gods will have you to be; and let 'em ſay what they pleaſe, you may depend upon it that you are a very *agreeable Perſon*. The *Conqueſt* you have made of *Venus* is an *Authentick Proof*. (What more do you deſire?) There is no *Paſſion* but what decays, and that which I have enter-

tain'd for you, was not able to exempt it ſelf from that *General Law* which decrees an *End* to all *Paſſions*.

MARS.

Oh! you tell me no News, and you may pleaſe to underſtand that I was mighty well appriz'd of your *Inconſtancy*. Have not you obſerv'd that for ſome time paſs'd, I did not preſume to come into your Preſence, I had a *forbidding Air* that carry'd a little *Guilt* along with it. To tell you the truth of the Matter, I could not call to mind thoſe *Sentiments* with which I formerly inſpir'd you, without the utmoſt Confuſion in being no longer able to excite the ſame. I don't know how you will pardon the *Indifference* into which I ſuffer'd you to fall of Late, and you have a great deal of Reaſon to reſent my ceaſing to make you Happy.

VENUS.

It's perfectly new for a Lover himſelf to vindicate the *Inconſtancy* of his *Miſtreſs*, and find out Excuſes to juſtifie her *Infidelity*.

MARS.

MARS.

How! wou'd you chuſe rather that I ſhould treat you like a *treacherous* and *ungrateful* Perſon? Ah! my *Notions* of *Love* are too reaſonable to admit of ſuch a *Conduct*. I know that it is in ſome ſort unjuſt to complain of handſome *Ladies* when they ceaſe to *Love* us. It wou'd become them much better to complain of us, their Reproaches wou'd prove better founded than ours.

VENUS.

What do you mean? *Lovers* had ever the Cuſtom of *murmuring* againſt an unfaithful *Miſtreſs*; never was their Right of complaining diſputed.

MARS.

So much the worſe; they never ſhou'd be allow'd that *Priviledge*.

VENUS.

But give me leave, is it not to want *Generoſity* to be tir'd of making a *Perſon Happy*, and is not this preciſely

ciſely the Caſe of thoſe *Belles* who forget their *Lovers*: Here is then ſufficient ground for *Reproach*.

MARS.

And is it not rather the Effect of an inſupportable *Vanity* on the ſide of *Lovers* to expect a *Miſtreſs* ſhou'd be ever *Faithful*? this Preſumption is the ſame as if we pretended to the ſole Right of conſtituting our own *Happineſs*. See now whether thoſe *Gallants* have Reaſon on their Side who find Fault with their *Miſtreſs's Inconſtancy*. For my Part, I can't forgive 'em their proud *Injuſtice*, which puts them upon exacting an *eternal Love*.

VENUS.

It is not from a Principle of *Vanity* that they deſire to be belov'd: *Aſſign* to *Love* a more noble *Motive*, it is that of *Delicacy*.

MARS.

If you will not allow that the deſire of being *Beloved* proceeds from Vanity,

DIALOGUE XVIII.

Upon Gratitude, and Revenge.

APOLLO *and* NEPTUNE.

NEPTUNE.

OH! for that matter *Laomedon* is an arrant *Knave*. He ſet us upon Building of *Troy:* We took all the care imaginable to make it a compleat piece of *Work*. it is at laſt finiſh'd: The perjur'd *King* forgets his Oaths, and refuſes to pay us for our Labour and Art.

APOLLO.

Betwixt Friends, we were a little to blame to exact any thing at his Hands. It wou'd have had a much better Air, had we built his City *Gratis*. May not the World ſay, that we had occaſion for his Protection, and that ſomething was wanting for com-

compleating *our Condition*. To be plain; we did not w ll obſerve the *Decorum of our Divinity*.

NEPTUNE.

What do you mean? At that time we were not *perfect Gods*. *Jupiter*, out of a little Pique he had to us, had diſpatch'd us to *Earth* upon a *Pilgrimage*. But ſince we have executed ſo n ble a Deſign, as the Building of *Troy*. It is but juſt that we ſhould be rewarded for our *Pains*, at leaſt by ſome *Sentiments* of *Gratitude*, ſince you will inſiſt that any other ſort of *Sallary* is below our *Dignity*.

APOLLO.

Pray, who told you that an Offering of *Gratitude* was more worthy of your *Acceptance* than any other, are we not ſovereignly Happy by the *Priviledge* of our *Nature*? What have we to hope from Men? *Gratitude* is of uſe only to themſelves, their Dependence being upon each other.

NEP-

Vanity, grant me at leaſt that Intereſt is its true *Motive*. *Your Delicacy*, if you obſerve well, is nothing *Elſe*; every Body deſires to make his *Pleaſures* ſure and laſting; for this purpoſe we muſt furniſh the Perſon with the ſame *Joys* which we pretend to receive from her; we ſo put her under a Neceſſity of *Gratifying* us without ceaſing, where is the poſſibility, pray, of wanting *Pleaſures*, ſince it is upon *Us* that hers Depends.

VENUS.

How! Is that which paſſeth under the Name of *Delicacy* the Effect of *Vanity*, or at leaſt a vile *Intereſt* which makes us Seek after what may be uſeful to us; that *Commerce* which is ſaid to be *Delicate*, is, however a very *ſcandalous one*, wherein we are ever ſure to be *Gainers*, we are then much to blame to ſet ſo great an Eſteem upon a *Quality*, which flows from ſo mean a *Principle*.

MARS.

Yet ſuch is the Nature, generally ſpeaking, of thoſe *Qualities* which are in *greateſt Vogue*; whoſoever ſhould go about to take them in pieces, would find that all the conſtituent Particles were nothing worth.

DIALOGUE XVII.

Concerning Modeſty and Honour.

DIANA *and* VENUS.

DIANA.

HEaven does not contain any thing ſo beautiful as you, this is what no Body pretends to diſpute with you; but will you ſuffer me to tell you my Thoughts freely, there is ſomething wanting to your *Charms*, I could wiſh you an *Air* of *Modeſty*, which without rendring you more *Cruel*, (I know this would be to exact too much at your Hands) would make

make you appear a little more ſo. *Modeſty* beſtows a World of *Graces*, ſhe was ever eſteem'd the *Pledge* of *Virtue*, and we are apt to believe ſhe influences the *Heart*, when we ſee her *Character* imprinted on the *Face*; for indeed, altho' *Virtue* does ſtand in Oppoſition to the Intereſt of *Lovers*, they nevertheleſs require her in the *Perſon* they love, for this Reaſon it may be that they *Triumph* in her *Defeat*. No matter. With a very ſmall Proportion of Modeſty, you will have almoſt as much *Virtue* as is requiſite, for the conferring the *Title* of *Conqueror* upon your *Lovers*, which they would not dare to aſſume in good Earneſt without *Impudence*.

VENUS.

But who told you, that *Modeſty* in a Lady was a Security to her *Virtue*? I now rather the one is a convincing *Proof* of the others *Frailty*. To bluſh at the Sight of a *Lover*, is it not to ſhew that we *Fear* him? The *Woman*, that depends upon her *Virtue* carries no ſuch *Apprehenſions* about her, the

the Knowledge ſhe has of her Forces does not allow her to queſtion their Courage, ſhe chearfully ventures to Engage, and is ſure of the *Victory*.

DIANA.

Why then is *Modeſty* ſo much eſteem'd?

VENUS.

Ah! Did I not juſt now tell you the Reaſon? ſhe fortifies our *Hopes*, and facilitates our *Conqueſts*; how can we help loving a *Quality*, which removes all Obſtacles that oppoſe our Felicity?

DIANA.

After what you have juſt now alledg'd, there will be no *Room* left for *Modeſty*.

VENUS.

I have not yet told you all. You muſt know that there is another ſort of *Modeſty*, which is a *refined Coquetry*, a delicate Manner of enhancing each alluring *Charm*. Whilſt you expoſe

poſe only one part to View, it is believ'd that you are poſſeſs'd of more than you really are, and you take advantage of the *Generoſity* of the *Imagination*, which as you *handſome Ladies* know very well, is ever careful to embelliſh whatſoever comes under its *Conſideration*. And who knows, beautiful *Goddeſs*, if that *Modeſty* of yours ſo much cryed up does not harbour ſome ſecret Deſign upon *Hearts*. But I will not *Cavil* with you, and am ready to renounce the *Right* I have of defeating the *Honour* of your *Wiſdom*.

DIANA.

It would become *Venus* mightily to argue with me upon the ſubject of *Virtue!*

VENUS.

Apprehend no ſuch Matter. For my Allotment of *Happineſs*, I ask only ſoft *Deſires*, ſweet *Fears*, well manag'd *Doubts*, and ſometimes *Pleaſures* which at leaſt leave room for Hopes: For theſe, I renounce Wiſdom,

dom, and all that has any Relation to it.

DIANA.

Ah! Were your *Vows* heard and *Crown'd* with Succeſs, your *Felicity* would however prove very Defective. Could you reſt ſatisfy'd with a *Pleaſure* which you ſhould attain at the Expence of your *Glory?*

VENUS.

Why not?

DIANA.

You are not in Earneſt. The natural *Tendency* we have to *Love*, does not extinguiſh the *Ardor* we all feel for *Reputation*. If we deſire to be *Belov'd*, we deſire too to be *Eſteem'd*. The Miſchief on't is, we can by means ſucceed in this Matter without ſacrificing that which conſtitutes the moſt conſiderable Part of our *Pleaſures*. We are condemn'd to hate the Lover who ſeems *agreeable*. We muſt have the *Reſolution* to refuſe a *Heart*, which our natural *Weak-*

Weakneſs perſuades us to *ſurrender*. We are not only depriv'd of the ſweet Tranſports of *Loving*, but we are not allow'd to be ſenſible of that *Vanity* which ariſes from being *admir'd*. So dear does *Glory* coſt us; add farther, that we are frequently diſappointed, tho' we do all that is poſſible to acquire it.

VENUS.

What you there advance ſeems ſtrange. How! becauſe a *Belle* ſhall be ſilly enough to combat her own *Deſires*; becauſe ſhe ſhall have the Malice to encourage them in anothers *Heart*, to the end only that ſhe may enjoy the barbarous Pleaſure of putting 'em upon the Rack; a fine Lady forſooth for theſe Reaſons ſhall be ſovereignly *Eſtimable*?

DIANA.

So have Men been pleas'd to determine. At the time they impos'd the Laws of Honour upon the Females, they foreſaw the Pain they ſhould endure in obeying them; and

to

to make 'em amends, they engag'd to preſent 'em with *Eſteem*.

VENUS.

It's true. But they don't exact a rigorous Obedience to their *Decrees*. Nay, they are even angry when they ſee Ladies too ſtrait-lac'd. Reflect, if you pleaſe, upon the firſt Occaſion of theſe Laws. They obſerv'd in Women too great a Bias to Tenderneſs, there was ſomething wanting to counterpoiſe it. For it nearly concern'd their Welfare, that they ſhould be able to defend themſelves. Upon this foot, *Men* did not ſcruple to make Laws as ſevere as poſſible. They were very ſure, that Women would ſoon, diſingage themſelves from a rigid Obſervance, and come to the point they firſt propos'd, which is calculated on purpoſe for their own Pleaſures, and ſo powerfully Flatters their *Glory*.

NEPTUNE

No matter. *Laomedon* was however concern'd in duty to teſtifie his Reſentments. It had been in our Pow'r afterwards to have acquitted him of any farther Acknowledgements, did we not think proper to admit 'em. For to be plain, I don't eſteem any Vice ſo terrible as that of *Ingratitude*.

APOLLO.

The whole World agrees in this Matter. You will however be much ſurpriz'd to find that *Ingratitude* is the Product in ſome Senſe of a *noble Spirit*, and that it is a *Sentiment* of *Grandeur* which makes *Ingrates*. Perhaps don't we judge our ſelves oblig'd to make any Returns for a *Benefit*, becauſe we think we deſerve it. It is here *True* that what cauſes our *Ingratitude* ſhou'd enhance our *Eſteem* for our *Benefactor*, and that we can't enough admire his Diſcernment in placing his *Favours*.

NEP-

NEPTUNE.

You ſupply us here with an *Idea* of *Ingratitude* altogether *Noble*. But if ſhe be related to ſuch *ſhining Qualities*, how comes it to paſs that ſhe is not in greater *Requeſt*?

APOLLO.

There are very good Reaſons for it. *Services* are generally done, either with a Proſpect of *Return*, or with Deſign to make the Perſons oblig'd ſenſible of their *Inferiority* and *Dependence*. If Men confer *Benefits*, with Deſign of converting them to their own *Advantage*; you can't imagine they would chuſe to *Traffick* with an *Ingrate*. In a *Commerce* like this, they are ſure to be conſtant *Loſers*. If they *oblige*, and propoſe to make the Perſon oblig'd dependent upon them, they are as ſure this way to be diſappointed. He ſcorns to pay any Acknowledgments for *Advantages* which have rather been impos'd, than receiv'd; and by the Proofs of his *Ingratitude*, he deprives 'em of the

the Means of treating him again in that *Manner*.

NEPTUNE.

Upon the whole Matter, I perceive I was mightily in the wrong to *Revenge* my ſelf upon *Laomedon*. But ſtill *Revenge* is wondrous ſweet. It is for this Reaſon pretended that we reſerve this *Pleaſure* to *our ſelves*.

APOLLO.

Men have for a long time made us *Subject* to their own *Follies*. And I can't for my Life imagine whence it is they borrow all their *Notions* about *Us*. Let 'em make *us* the *Puniſhers* of *Crimes* and Welcome; this is an Employment conſiſtent with *Reaſon*. But let 'em not according to their Mode pretend that we have a *Gout* for *Revenge*, ſo diſhonourable to the Dignity of our *Natures*. For in ſhort, can we admit a *Notion* of *Revenge* without confeſſing the Frailty of being ſubject to *Offences*? And can it become *Deities* to pique themſelves about what is *given*, or detain'd

tain'd from them by *Mortals*? By this Means *our Beatitude* wou'd ſuffer Diminution in Proportion to the *Delicacy* of our *Sentiments*. Beſides, *Revenge* wou'd engage *us* into a *Compariſon* with thoſe who *Injure* us, and it is not likely that Gods ſhou'd be ſo devoid of *Reaſon* as to enter into *Competition* with Men. But farther, there is a ſort of *Meanneſs* in *Revenge*, and is ſo little conſiſtent with common *Prudence*, that it does not in the leaſt anſwer the *Deſign* of mortifying an *Enemy*. For after all, whilſt we ſeek to *Revenge* our ſelves, we give our *Enemy* all the Satisfaction he could expect from his *Inſults*. Do we not confeſs our ſelves *offended*, and is not this what he *Wiſhes*? A *Pardon* wou'd prove much more *provoking*. This wou'd put us out of the reach of his poiſon'd *Arrows*; and diſappointing him of the Pleaſure of putting us out of *Humour*, with which he was ſo much tranſported, it wou'd deprive him of the means of *gratifying* his *Malignity* another time.

NEP-

NEPTUNE.

I muſt therefore forgive *Laomedon*.

APOLLO.

Moſt certainly. I might even tell you, that you ought to Eſteem him yet more, purpoſely for the ſake of his Ingratitude.

For really *Laomedon* was a Perſon of Integrity, who confeſſing himſelf *Ungrateful*, had no mind farther to *Impoſe* upon you. Had he entertain'd any ſuch *Deſign*, he would have given you ſome Marks of his *Gratitude*, and ſo would have got out of you ſome new Favour; or elſe, as I told you before, he would have eſteem'd himſelf worthy of the *Benefit*, and conſequently diſengag'd himſelf from all Returns. Who knows but that he look'd upon it as a Debt, of which you was glad to acquit your ſelf? Don't therefore upon ſlight Grounds accuſe him of Ingratitude; and ſeeing ſhe bears ſome Relation to a Great Soul, learn that Vices and ill Qualities partake ſometimes of good Principles.

DIALOGUE XIX.

Upon Glory.

MARS *and* APOLLO.

APOLLO.

YOU would find your ſelf extreamly diſappointed, and your *Court* very thin, did Men agree to be *Wiſe*.

MARS.

What's that you ſay?

APOLLO.

I aſſert that nothing proves the *Extravagance* of *Mankind* ſo much as the *Ardor* they have of following you into *Battles*; and that if they had any Senſe, they would let you make War in your own ſingle Perſon.

MARS.

MARS.

What harm have I done you, that you ſhould wiſh to deprive me of all my Subjects?

APOLLO.

I can't forgive you that *Cruelty*, which ſets you upon arming *Men* one againſt the other. Why are they ſent to kill each other, without having any ſort of Difference amongſt themſelves? And how can Men be ſo great *Ideots*, as to go and expoſe their *Lives?* for indeed, it is the greateſt *Bleſſing* they enjoy.

MARS.

Well! Men are not ſuch *Fools* as you make 'em in this *Inſtance*, no more than in any other. They never *Sacrifice* one *Advantage*, but to the Hopes of another which to them ſeems better, and I ſee no *Folly* in all this. For Example, they muſt go through a World of *Fatigues* in the *Trade* of *War*: They frequently hazard their Lives; but on the other

ſide, what *Rewards* may they not expect? *Glory*, that *ſovereign Miſtreſs* of *great Souls*, very well knows how to make *them* amends. Tho' never ſo much expos'd to *Death*, *Glory* knows which way to *Reſcue* her *Heroes*.

APOLLO.

Is not this a pleaſant Way now of making Men *Immortal?*

MARS.

You ſee however, that they are never tir'd of my Service. Poſſibly, becauſe it is not ſo ungrateful as you repreſent it. But you, who ſet up for a *Reformer*, what Rewards do you confer upon *your Virtuoſos?* Don't you pay them in the ſame *Specie?* Is it not Glory that ſupports them in their *Labours*, and ſooths their *Pains?*

APOLLO.

I never propoſe to them ſuch a *Chimera* as *Glory* for an *Object*, the *Knowledge* of *Truth* is the *Prize* of their *Studies*.

MARS.

MARS.

A Noble *Prize* indeed!

APOLLO.

How! Will you not allow the *Knowledge* of *Truth* to be ſufficient? Is there any thing more *Charming* than to be *Learned*, and to give the *Underſtanding* all the Scope of which ſhe is capable?

MARS.

And ſince what time pray has *Truth* had wherewithal to gratifie *Mankind?* Are not you appriz'd that ſhe preſents them with *diſagreeable Proſpects* only? That which flatters ſo much the Imagination of *Virtuoſos*, is not an *Agreeableneſs* annexed to the Perception of *Truth*; it is the *Diſtinction* wherewithal ſhe furniſheth them: Conſider well this Point. Common *Truths* are very little ſet by, they are attain'd with too great *Facility*. It is thoſe only which ſeem to place Men above their Fellows that *Merit* their *Eſteem*, and affects them with Jealouſie.

APOLLO.

This ſort of *Glory*, however, is preferable to the other.

MARS.

Let us not enter upon this *Enquiry*. We ſhall not perhaps find more *Solidity* in the one than the other.

APOLLO.

Let me know then in what it is that *Glory* conſiſts?

MARS.

Glory is an *Artifice* of which *Society* makes uſe, to engage Men in the Support of her Intereſt.

APOLLO.

But, upon this foot, *Glory* ſuppoſes ever *Folly* on his Side who acquires her; for to what end do we fatigue our ſelves for others? Why do we not labour for *our ſelves*?

MARS.

This is what *Society forbids*. Her *Secret* is in perſuading Men to forget their proper

proper Intereſts, and to lay themſelves out intirely in the *Service* of each other. So that when they have acquitted themſelves well of what is expected at their Hands, and *Juſtice* requires that they ſhould have ſome Reward, *Eſteem* is immediately conferr'd upon them; and in this manner are they paid for their Pains.

APOLLO.

That is to ſay, a ſort of *Traffick* has been eſtabliſh'd amongſt Men, in which one part is oblig'd to contribute their Sweat and their Labour to make a Return of *Glory*.

MARS.

You have ſaid it.

APOLLO.

That Commerce muſt have been ill concerted, wherein ſome are ſure to be *Loſers*. For *Glory* is ſeldom worth ſo much as ſhe coſts.

MARS.

It's true: But without this ſame *Glory*, all brave *Actions* would fall

to the Ground. *Hero's* would no longer purge the *Earth*; and reſting ſatisfy'd under Ignorance, and a ſimple *Admiration* of *Nature*, the *Philoſophers* would no longer pretend to force her *Secrets* from her, the diſcovery whereof is ſo beneficial to *Men*. The more I conſider this, the more am I convinc'd, that Glory is a neceſſary *Ingredient* in *Society*. Pray what would be the Conſequence, if *Men* were *Wiſe*?

APOLLO.

Oh! Nature is very Provident: She has made altogether as many Fools, as ſhe had occaſion for.

MARS.

But, it is theſe very ſame Fools who are ſo loaded with *Glory*.

APOLLO.

Nor is there any thing more reaſonable; ſhe was made purpoſely for their *Uſe*. The *wiſe Man* entertains no Jealouſie about it. He extols their *Labours* in the midſt of his *Idleneſs*,

neſs, and takes all poſſible Care not to aſſume the leaſt ſhare to himſelf.

MARS.

As for my Part, I wiſh that whilſt the *Appearances* of *Eſteem* were paid to thoſe who take ſo great Pains to acquire *Glory*; we might enjoy the *Privilege* of *deſpiſing* them inwardly. For indeed it is extream *Folly* not to labour for ones ſelf. Moreover, thoſe who runaige themſelves with the moſt difficult *Undertakings*; and Slaves to Society, don't they ſubmit to the moſt painful *Functions*?

APOLLO.

You are in the Right. Contempt ſeems to be the proper *Recompence* of that *Action*, which is done meerly for the ſake of *Glory*.

DIALOGUE XX.

Upon Virtue.

DIANA *and* MARS.

MARS.

FAIR *Goddeſs*, there are ſtrange cern you nearly, and if [illegible] Word may be taken, you have not always been ſo cruel as you have affected to appear in our Eyes. They talk of a *Shepherd*.

DIANA.

Ah! don't believe a Tittle of what *Momus* ſays. Whatſoever comes from him ought to be ſuſpected, and my paſt Conduct ſhou'd prove the *Guarantee* of my *Wiſdom*.

MARS.

I muſt beg your Pardon for that. The *Arms* of *Virtue* are as eaſily laid down,

down, as taken up. A *Conqueror* with all his *Wiſdom* about him may loſe a *Battel*. A *Lady* with a great ſhare of *Virtue* may have her *Failings*. The beſt Meaſures have been concerted for a Defence, and yet a *Defeat* has enſu d. I ſhou'd however be much ſurpriz'd that you ſhou'd belye that *Wiſdom*, upon which you have valu'd you ſelf ſo long. It were great pity that you ſhould caſt a Blemiſh upon that *Reputation*, which coſt you ſo much Pains to *eſtabliſh*.

DIANA.

Therefore have I took all poſſible Care not do any thing that wou'd bear the leaſt Reflection. I ſhall notwithſtanding confeſs frankly that I found in *Endimion* every thing that cou'd poſſibly inſpire the Sentiments of *Love*. I had occaſion for all my Wiſdom about me to defend me from his *Charms*. I curs'd a thouſand times that cruel *Obligation of Honour* which would not allow me to be *Happy*. How different, *God of War*, is my *Glory* from yours! I cannot attain mine

without reſiſting my *natural Diſpoſitions*, and it ſuffices you to follow 'em.

MARS.

What is that you ſay?

DIANA.

I ſay, that the way which leads you to *Glory* is very eaſie; I might even maintain that it wou'd prove a hard matter for you to miſs it. Is it poſſible for ſo hot a Temper as that of yours to be at Reſt? You will allow, I believe, that nothing cou'd provoke you more, than to oblige you to be *quiet*. But Heav'n has agreed to give you up to the impetuoſity of your *Character*. You run like a Mad-man from Town to Town: You take *Towns*, you gain *Battels*. What *Proviſion* of *Lawrels* to Crown your Head! what Honours are not prepar'd for you? Alas! the *Glory* which is allotted me by the Fates, can never be purchas'd at ſo eaſie a *rate* They condemn me to fight the Enemy I Love. I am oblig'd by a Senſe

Senſe of *Honour* to gain the Victory, which a Conſideration of *Intereſt* perſuades me to loſe. Beſides, I have no Quarters of Refreſhment, no Intervals of Repoſe, like you: But ever in the Field, and ever engag'd. How ſevere a Condition is that of *Wiſdom*, but how infinitely ought ſhe to be priz'd?

MARS.

I confeſs that every Body muſt pay a *Deference* to your ſort of *Wiſdom*; for Juſtice muſt be done. But I cannot approve your condemning ſo freely that Glory which is acquir'd by *Arms*. Conſider a little; he muſt have a *great Soul* who deſpiſes *Life*.

DIANA.

I agree with you. But your *Heroes* don't deſpiſe it: They eſteem it altogether as much as other People; and don't fancy that they wou'd go about to expoſe it, were they very ſure of loſing it. They have not always the ill Fortune to be kill'd, when they run the Riſque of being ſo.

ſo. Add to this, that Armies don't engage ev'ry Day; and when they do, your Heroes are ſuſtain'd and encourag'd by the Lookers on, who are ready to give Teſtimony of their *Valour*. No Body is Witneſs of thoſe Battles which are fought in my *Heart*, and I muſt neceſſarily ſit down ſatisfy'd with the meer *Juſtice* which I do my ſelf. How doleful a Recompence is this!

MARS.

I am of your Opinion. That Recompence is by no means proportionable to your Merit. It's for this Reaſon likewiſe that *Glory* is aſſign'd you; and it is very certain, that next to the Warriors no Body deſerves it better than you.

DIANA.

Ah! make no longer your Boaſts of that *Glory* which is only employ'd in the Deſtruction of Mankind.

MARS.

And that which contributes to their *Miſery*, tell me, do you believe it leſs *Cruel*? You don't kill Men down-right; you are ſtill more *barbarous*, you put 'em upon the Rack. But, there is ſomething in your Conduct more ridiculous than all this. You ſuffer this very ſame *Glory* to render you *miſerable*. And this is what I can never pardon you.

DIANA.

What appears to you moſt worthy of Ridicule in my Conduct, is the very thing that gives a Luſter to its *Glory*. I argue the minuteſt Matters with my ſelf; nothing that is capable of indulging my *Vanity*, is admitted by my *ſcrupulous Wiſdom*. All this is Matter of Fact. But remember that *Glory* ought ever to bear a Proportion to the Efforts we make to attain it. And upon this Foot, do you form a Notion of that *Honour* which is my Perquiſit.

MARS.

MARS.

Alas! what Value can you put upon *Honour* that is acquir'd by ſuch painful *Strugglings*, and which is purchas'd at the expence of *Happineſs*? Do you not bluſh ſometimes at the *Victories* you get over your ſelf? Ah! believe me true *Wiſdom* was never made with Deſign to render the Perſon miſerable who poſſeſſeth it.

DIANA.

Yet is it this alone that has the Reputation of being truly *Eſtimable*. For wou'd you preſume to affix the Name of *Virtue* to all thoſe Qualities which Men generally wear, for no other Reaſon than that there is too much Fatigue in diveſting themſelves of them, ſuch as *Valour*, *Compaſſion*, *Generoſity*, and ſo many others of the ſame Sort.

MARS.

In ſhort, the Acquiſition of my *Species* of *Virtue* by you ſo much deſi'd, coſts no Pains; beſides that, it is

is infinitely more agreeable, and more attainable than yours. For to conclude: Moſt People are *weak* enough to be *Virtuous*, but ſeldom *reſolute* enough to become ſo. For this Reaſon you ſee mine is the more *common*. And it is plain by *Experience*, that *Nature* relies more upon the *Inſufficiency* of *Mankind* than the *Strength* of their *Reaſon*.

DIANA.

According to this Account there are but two ſorts of *Virtue*. *One* of *Weakneſs*; the *other* of *Self-conſtraint*. But are you appriz'd that the firſt would imply *Imperfection*, and the latter, *Folly*.

AN ECLAIRCISMENT UPON THE DIALOGUES OF THE *GODS.*

AN ECLAIRCISMENT UPON THE *Dialogues of the Gods.*

NO Perſon has purpoſely written Criticiſm upon my *Book*. Few there are who merit ſo great an *Honour*; and I have not been vain enough to expect from the *Publick* ſo peculiar a *Mark* of its *Eſteem*. The *Publick* however, which has not thought me worthy of a *Criticiſm* in *Form*, has been well enough pleas'd in a *looſe manner* to cenſure a great many Paſſages in *my Book*.

Some ſay that the *Fury* I was poſſeſs'd with of being *Jocoſe*, ſuffers me very

very ſeldom to be *exact*; and that it frequently happens to me to *disfigure Truth*, by endeavouring to *embelliſh* it. This is the leaſt Fault that is laid to my Charge: I think my ſelf oblig'd however to anſwer an Accuſation that affects me in a more ſenſible manner; and it is in order to *juſtifie* my ſelf, that at this time I take Pen in Hand. I ſay, it is not the *Vanity* of an *Author* that rouzes me: A more *noble Motive* inſpires me; and little *jealous* of the Reputation of my *Wit*, I ſhould moſt chearfully give up the Defects of my *Work*, were I not attack'd on a ſide a thouſand times more ſenſible.

Some Perſons accuſe me of having deſtroy'd the *Ideas* of *Morality*; and aſſert, that by endeavouring to *Analyſe* the *Virtues*, I reduce them to nothing. *God forbid* I ſhould have entertain'd any ſuch Deſign. When I treat of *human Virtues*, I diſcover their *weak ſide*; but they continue ever what they are, and I never rob them of that intrinſick Value which is interwove in *their Eſſence*.

When

when I ſpeak of the *Vices*, I vail their *Deformity*; in order to expoſe thoſe *virtuous Appearances* wherewith they ſometimes inveſt themſelves. There are two things in our *Actions*; that which appears to thoſe who ſee us *act*, and the End we propoſe to our ſelves in *acting*. Now, it often happens that a Man in his Conduct puts on a ſpecious *Air* of *Virtue*; and that the *Motive* which determines him has nothing in it that is *virtuous*. On the other ſide, a Man's *Conduct* ſhall appear *ſuſpected* and *vicious*, but it may ſtill be directed by a *Principle* of *commendable Deſigns*. As Men form their Judgments generally from Appearances, they frequently take the contrary Side, and are very apt to pay their Homage to *Vice*, which aſſumes the Outſide of *Virtue*. They frequently too take that for *Vice*, which they ought not to look upon as ſuch, and which wou'd be juſtify'd by the Agents motive, were it perceiv'd: For it's by the End we propoſe to our ſelves in *acting* that we are *Virtuous* or *Vicious*.

This

This is what I wou'd have underſtood by the *Idea* I give of *Ingratitude*. An *Idea* which the *Reader* wou'd do well not to forgive me, had I deſign'd what I ſaid ſhould be taken in a *litteral Senſe*; but this is not my Intention; and Ingratitude is a *Vice* which is not ſufficiently to be deteſted. My Meaning was only, that there are ſome particular Caſes, wherein what ſeems to have an *Air* of *Ingratitude*, might not really be ſuch. A Man, for Inſtance, who ſhould oblige himſelf not to return a Benefit to his Friend, which he had receiv'd at his Hands, with deſign only to leave his Friend ſome Pretenſions over him; and who to increaſe his Friendſhip, wou'd run the Riſque of paſſing for an ungrateful Perſon, ſhould not however lie under that Imputation. What wou'd have the appearance of *Vice* in his Conduct, might be juſtify'd by a laudable *Motive*; and it's the Motive only that lays the diſtinguiſhing Accent upon our *Actions*.

One

One of the *greateſt Genius* that *England* ever produc'd, my Lord *Chancellor Bacon*, has built upon this Principle, whilſt he advances a Paradox upon *Ingratitude*, reſembling that in my *Dialogue* of *Apollo* and *Neptune*. *Ingratitude*, ſays he, is ſcarce any *thing elſe, but a ſubtil and ingenious Reflection upon the true Motive of a Benefit receiv'd.* Would one not conclude, that by this Definition he deſign'd to write an *Encomium* upon *Ingratitude*? Yet did ever any Body accuſe him of not having a juſt Abhorrence for that *Vice*. Altho' he dares to ſay, that the *Return* is only due to the Motive, and that it is lawful to make a ſtrict Enquiry into it, altho' by this Examination we are ſure to paſs for *ungrateful Perſons*. This way of expreſſing my ſelf, which I borrow from ſo *Great* a *Man*, ought to apologize for me in ſome Degree to the *Publick*; and what I advance concerning the *Virtues* and *Vices* ſhould not be ſufficient to give ſuch *frightful Alarms*. I ſpeak only of that Superfices which diſguiſes them;

them; and never attack the Foundation of *Virtues*, which cannot be respected in too high a Degree. I know that we ought ever to entertain a grateful Sense for *Benefits receiv'd*. A *feeling* Sense of other Peoples Misfortunes, and be ready to Administer all possible Consolation to the *Unhappy*; I know it is our Duty to serve our *Prince*, and our *Country*. I know we have all a Proportion of Reason assign'd us, wherewith to moderate our *Passions*, and render them *Useful* to *Society*.

If I seem to have any other Meaning, I guess the Reason; I have fallen into a Mistake common to Philosophers. A Mistake of less dangerous Consequence to the Publick, since all Philosophers are dogmatical. I have annex'd to *Words* some *Ideas*, which the same words do not generally stir up in the *Mind*. And by this means I have embarrass'd the *Reader*, who wishes he should be address'd to in his own *Language*. As for Example, I am accus'd of having confounded *Virtues* and *Vices*, *Physick* and

and *Morality*, *Wiſdom* and *Paſſion*. I ſtrike a Reader with horror, when I ſay that *Wiſdom* is a *Paſſion*. And yet methinks every *Movement* that diſpoſes the Soul briskly to any one thing, may be call'd *Paſſion*. There are ſome Perſons who have a violent Tendency to *Good*, and have at the ſame time a *Wiſdom vigorous* enough to be call'd *Paſſion*. St. *Auguſtin* himſelf calls *Grace* a *Holy Concupiſcence*; and if I may be allow'd to call it *Paſſion* after him, it is a happy *Paſſion*, which has ſo much the greater Power, ſince far from being oppos'd by Reaſon, like others, ſhe ſees her ſelf approv'd by it. Not that I am ignorant, that there is another ſort of *Wiſdom*, whoſe enlightning Councils give us Strength to ſtop the *Career* of our *Paſſions*. But a *Reader*, who ſees the word *Wiſdom* united to *Paſſion*, thinks all is confounded, and that the *Author* pretends to embroil his *Ideas*, altho' in the Main they both agree in Opinion.

It's matter again of ſurprize, my aſſerting that *Sloth*, which ought to be deem'd a *Vice*, was the only Quality of the *Soul* that denoted *Excellency*, and *Perfection* in its Nature. This however is only a *Paradox*. Which points out the *Indigency* of our *natural Condition*, by making us conceive, that if we were born perfectly happy, we ſhould have nothing to do to become ſo. The *Sloth* I ſpeak of, is only *Imaginary*; and the *Soul* is never ſo eaſie under its preſent State, as not to imagine one more agreeable, which ſhe fain would propoſe to her ſelf.

It is ever becauſe I have not expreſs'd my ſelf in *vulgar Language*, that I have affected the *Reader*'s Brains with ſome *Diſorder* and *Jealouſie*. For Example, when I ſay the *Gods exact no Acknowledgment*, I ſpeak of ſuch a *Return* of *Gratitude* as implies *Want*; it is ſure that *God* exacts nothing like it at our Hands. Altho' we owe him a conſtant *Tribute*, as *Creator* and firſt *Principle of Things*.

I farther aſſert that the *Gods* ought not to *revenge* themſelves, and that they ought only to *puniſh*. The *Pagans* had beſtow'd upon their *Gods* all their own *Failings*, that they might with the better Grace deliver themſelves up to their Dominion. A *Being infinitely wiſe* does not revenge it ſelf; but *puniſheth Crimes*: A *wiſe Judge* puniſheth thoſe who infringe the *Laws*, without being excited to it by a *Sentiment* of *Revenge*. And when the *Scripture* ſpeaks to us of *God*, as a *Revenger*, ſhe does not mean an imperfect Revenge, which ſhould ſavour of *Weakneſs*; but a juſt and wiſe Puniſhment proportion'd to our *Crimes*.

I was in the wrong to have expos'd ordinary *Ideas* in a new *Method*. I deſign'd only to *pique the Underſtanding* and I have terrify'd it. I can otherwiſe aſſure the *Publick*, I never purpos'd to alter the general receiv'd *Ideas* of *Virtues* and *Vices*. However, if it be thought that I had no ſuch Deſign; I am ſtill to blame for having ill expreſs'd my ſelf.

The *Pleaſure* I conceived in forming of *Paradoxes*, did not ſuffer me to attend ſufficiently to the main Point of my *Subject*. *Paradoxes* naturally provoke, and rouze a Man's *Apprehenſions*; and there is no harm in preſenting him with ſuch ſometimes, in order to exerciſe his Faculties: But proper Subjects are to be made choice of, and thoſe of *Morality* are too important to receive that *Turn*, and to be treated in a *jocoſe* and *pleaſant manner*. Had I thought of this before, I wou'd not have given the *Reader* any occaſion of thinking diſadvantagiouſly of me, and I beg he will accept of my Excuſes. He ought with the greater Alacrity to pardon me, becauſe I am ready to do for his Sake what ſeldom *human Pride* ſubmits to. I my ſelf will condemn my own Notions, whenſoever they appear capable of doing any Injury to *Morality*. But I believe I have only my *Expreſſions* to anſwer for.

It is very juſt that I ſhould be a little ſolac'd upon the Score of that *Injury* that has been done me. For in

in ſhort, *Vanity* which ſerves Men ſometimes well, ſometimes ill, has ſerv'd me very ill in my Book. In crying down the *Qualities* of the *Heart*, I have expos'd my own with a Vengeance, and am ſeverely puniſh'd for what I have ſaid concerning *Ingratitude*. One muſt have a world of *Charity*, cry they, to conceive it poſſible for me to be an *honeſt Man*. I deſire, however, the World will not form ſo raſh a Judgment. That *Aſſurance*, which makes us cry down the *Qualites* of the *Heart*, ſeems to denote that he who diſparageth them, does however poſſeſs them in Perfection; and that he does not think himſelf oblig'd to boaſt his *Poſſeſſions*. This *Argument* is *plauſible enough*; and ſuppoſing it were not true, let it be remembred however in my *Juſtification*, that the Corruption of the Mind does not include that of the Body. Were I not apprehenſive of giving my *Eclairciſment* an *Air of Learning*, I could eaſily produce *Examples* from *Antiquity*; but I flatter my ſelf that without that

Reinforcement, the *Publick* will be ready to return me that *Eſteem* which I have forfeited by the *Form* of my *Book*.

That kind of *Dialogue* which I have made choice of, is a trifling manner of Writing, which does not ſuit with *grave Notions*; becauſe in a Dialogue you cannot enter into the *Detail* of things, which is ever dry and taſteleſs; and it is no doubt the Suppreſſion of this *Detail* which has given room to believe that my deſign was to diſcredit all *Moral Virtues*. As there are ſome *Dialogues* in my *Book* which run upon *gallant Notions*; and whereas there ought to preſide a ſort of *Uniformity* in all Performances of this kind; I have treated *ſerious Matters* in a manner that is not ſo: And *pleaſant ones* in a manner ſtill more *gay* and *plaiſant*. But when *Raillery* is not put upon the *Reader* for any thing more than its *intrinſick Value*, it's lawful to uſe it at Pleaſure; and *Dialogue* is a kind of writing where it is thought ev'ry thing that is ſaid will not be taken in a litteral Senſe.

It

It would methinks be a manifeſt *Injuſtice* to wrangle with me about the *Dialogue* of *Mars* and *Vulcan*. In which *Vulcan* pretends to have receiv'd peculiar Marks of Honour by his Wife's *Inconſtancy*. Would it become any Body to tell me, that I deſign to ſubvert the general Notion of Things? No. For it's plain that I rally all the while. The *Ideas* of this *Dialogue*, and the *Turn* I give them, diſcover this abundantly. And indeed, when *Truth* and *Falſhood* are intermix'd agreeably, the Reader in gratitude ought not to confound them. That out of which he extracts a *Crime*, is a Mark of *Eſteem* that is paid him; and is it juſt to *puniſh* an *Author* for having too much depended upon his *good Underſtanding*? It is the *Reader's* buſineſs to divine his *Author's* Meaning, who deſigns that ſome allowances ſhould be made in what he ſays, and that things ſhould be reduc'd to their juſt Weight and Value.

I ſhould be ſorry, for Example, that what I have argu'd in one of

my *Dialogues* againſt *Glory*, which I have done with too great Vehemence, ſhould be taken in a litteral Senſe—— To render things the more obvious, we exaggerate them, without being appriz'd of what we are doing; but there is no ſort of danger of defacing thoſe *general Impreſſions* which are the *Gift* of *Nature*; theſe ever remain the ſame. The love of *Eſteem* is not a *Prejudice* of *Opinion*, and tho' it is ſubſervient to the *Welfare* of *Society*, we muſt not fancy, that we derive it from a *politick Principle*: *Nature* inſpires us with the Ambition of *advancing* our ſelves; and this *Paſſion* is ever at War with our *Idleneſs*. There is no Man how *ſlothful* ſoever that turns his Back altogether upon the *Eſteem* of other Men, and who does not make ſome advances to acquire it; and theſe *advances* turn always to the *good* of the *Publick*. Altho' I have a little diſparag'd *Glory*, a great many better Things may be ſaid in her Favour, than thoſe I have ſaid againſt her. And thoſe who court *Honour* are not ſo devoid

of

of Underſtanding, as I have repreſented them in my Dialogue. Where, however, I declar'd that *Glory* ever made thoſe amends, who ſacrific'd at her Altars. And indeed there is ſomething ever to be acquir'd by thoſe who are *ambitious* of a *Name*. It's thro' inadvertency that *Glory* is ſtil'd a *Chimera*. Are not a thouſand real *Advantages* to be compaſs'd by a *Motive* of *Glory*? And that honourable Place which we poſſeſs in the *Minds* of *Men*, is it not attended with a thouſand ſolid *Conveniencies*? I have expreſs'd my ſelf after a different manner in my *Dialogue*; but tho' all the *Paſſions* which are diſpens'd by the *Author* of *Nature* are good in themſeves, ſtill when they are puſh'd too far they turn to an ill account; and *Glory*, which holds her Rank amongſt theſe, being ſubject to the ſame Inconveniency, ought in my Opinion to be kept within due Bounds.

There are, it may be, ſome Paſſages in my *Dialogues*, that deſerve very well to be explain'd. But if

any perplex the generality of Readers, let them ſubſtitute in the room of my Notions ſuch as they think proper, and let them be aſſur'd, that I am ready to ſubſcribe to their Determination. I became blamable only by reckoning too much upon my *Innocence*. That *Subject* which an *Author* has ſtudy'd, lyes diſtinct and clear to the *View* of his *Mind*, with all its dependant *Ideas*; and two words ſuffice to expreſs the whole matter. The *Reader*, who has not advanc'd ſo far, grows weary; and as there is ſomething wanting to help his Apprehenſion, which is not expreſs'd frequently, he lays the Fault upon the Author, and ſometimes with ſufficient Reaſon. I am charg'd with this Failing, and deſervedly in ſome Paſſages. I am really oblig'd to reproach my ſelf with the l ttle Care I took of explaining thoſe *Ideas*, which refer to important Matters, and which cannot be made out too plain.

There is no danger in forming our Conjectures upon *indifferent Things*. But we cannot be too circumſpect in broach-

broaching any thing *New* that has the leaſt Relation to *Morality*. We muſt ſuppreſs the *Curioſity* of examining *Ideas* which have long paſs'd current, in *a new Light*: Every thing that has the *Air* of *Novelty alarms us*. A *Reader* ſhould never be diverted from thoſe *Views*, which are the moſt *familiar* to him, altho' ſome uſeful ones might be ſubſtituted in their Place. Thoſe he would incline to retain, and thoſe he would acquire, might produce an inconvenient Mixture for him. I arraign my ſelf, but I had rather declare my ſelf guilty, than make my *Reader* run the hazard of being deceiv'd in ſo *important* a *Subject* as that of *Morality*.

What farther an *Author* ought to have a ſpecial regard to, is not to ſift thoſe Matters too nicely, which he intends to treat in a jocoſe manner.

When we deſign to examine any thing to the bottom, we muſt make it our whole Buſineſs; and then we run no Riſque of making any dangerous Impreſſions: By *analyſing* an *Idea* in this manner, we expoſe it ſufficiently

ently in a true Light, to divert the *Reader* from any wrong Courſe he might take. But I have made uſe of a quite contrary Method to what ſhould have been purſu'd. I have *play'd* with the moſt *ſerious* and *weighty Subjects*. And the *Raillery* by my Management muſt neceſſarily have had as great an influence upon the *Underſtandings*, as I cou'd wiſh to the moſt *uſeful import* of my Ideas.

In order to *juſtifie* my ſelf, I lay a world of Things to my own Charge; but I cannot do enough to engage the Publick to lay aſide that ill Opinion it entertain'd of me; and for which it imagin'd there was ſufficient Grounds.

Some Perſons reproach me with a leſs important Fault, that is *Idleneſs*; and ſay I have been guilty of ſome *Neglects* in *Style*. They may be in the right; but they don't reflect, that there are ſome *Negligences*, which are Graces. a *Style* always *lofty* gives one Pain; it is convenient ſometimes to *ſet Foot on Ground*, and *repoſe ones ſelf*: *Theſe Halts* are call'd *Negligences*. I grant

grant it, but I maintain that they are abſolutely neceſſary. The *greateſt Art* of an *Author* conſiſts in managing his *Decorations*, and diſpoſing them to the *beſt Advantage*. We muſt ſometimes have the Reſolution to avoid an Opportunity of *pleaſing*, that we may be able to pleaſe in the ſequel to a higher *Degree*, and with *better Succeſs*. Should too many *beautiful Strokes* be crowded into a *Diſcourſe*; they wou'd prove prejudicial to each other. No Body cares to be ever upon the admiring Strain. It ſeems a little expenſive. The truth of the Matter is, that one *Beauty* by being plac d near another, loſes ſomething of her *Luſter*: But this Loſs would be made up to the two *Beauties*, by the Interpoſition of ſomething plain and ſimple. *Pleaſure* requires *Intervals*, and we muſt have a breathing time, in order to be affected by it in a more feeling manner.

What I here advance, does by no means excuſe my *Neglects*, and I know there are ſome in my *Book* which I ſhould not dare to paſs off for *Graces*, and

and which really eſcap'd me. But this is not my Fault. My *Book* was taken from me before I had put a finiſhing Hand to it, and when I had ſome Alterations to make. I don't oblige the Publick to reſt ſatisfy'd with this Excuſe: It is worth our while always to take care not to expoſe our ſelves, before we are worthy of making our Appearance.

I promis'd in the beginning of this *Diſcourſe* that I wou'd make ſome anſwer to thoſe Perſons who pretend to *Exactneſs*. I ought to be as good as my Word, and I ſhall do it the more chearfully, ſince theſe are the Perſons of greateſt Repute in the *Empire* of *Letters*.

There are ſome who will not allow of any ſort of *Ornament*, and who (for which they are not to be reproach'd) generally ſpeaking will never make uſe of any themſelves. Has not *Truth*, cry they, wherewithal to entertain Mankind, without ſome foreign *Embelliſhment*? What occaſion has ſhe for that *Dreſs* which disfigures her? And cannot an *Au-*

thor

thor make his *Parts* ſhine out any other way, than at the expence of *Truth*? Now here is a *Zeal* which cannot enough be admir'd. But I would have theſe *Gentlemen* convey their *Zeal* into the *Brains* of the *Readers*. For in ſhort, at the ſame time theſe deſire to be *inſtructed*, they deſire to be *amus'd*; and let us ſee whether or no I be in the wrong according to this State of the Caſe. For this Purpoſe, I muſt examine the Nature of Accuracy, and its Uſes, and take Things a little higher, with which I am infinitely pleas'd. I may poſſibly recover my Reputation with the *exact Perſons*, by ſhewing 'em that I am not always a Trifler.

Accuracy is the moſt eſſential *Quality* of the *Mind*; and altho' the reſt are more *glittering*, they are not however worthy of *Eſteem*, but when Exactneſs ſerves for their Foundation. The *Vivacity* of the *Mind* is employed in giving a *Body* to thoſe *Ideas* which have none of their own, and in ſoothing the *Imagination* which is glad to have any thing to lean upon.

Subtilty

Subtilty ſerves to analyſe the moſt perplex'd Matters. The uſe of *Delicacy* is not to ſay all, and yet to ſay enough. The *Extent* of the *Underſtanding* preſents us with a great many *Ideas* at once, and ſuffers them to be ſeen diſtinctly. It is eaſie to conceive that all the *Qualities* of the *Mind* have an unavoidable neceſſity for *Exactneſs*, that it is ſhe that gives them their true *Beauty*. But we ſhall give a more particular Account of this Matter.

A *ſprightly Imagination*, and which ſhall not be *accurate*, will inveſt *Ideas* with *Bodies*, but *ſuperfluouſly*. Now an *Image* in order to pleaſe muſt repreſent an *Object* ſuch as it is. A *keen Penetration* will eaſily diſcover what is moſt *ſubtil* in any Matter, and what eſcap'd the diſcernment of others: But how without the Mediation of *Exactneſs* will he ſee the *Connexion* of what he has found, with that he knew before? A *delicate Imagination* will leave too great room for Conjecture; if ſhe is not attended by a ſort of *Exactneſs* which appertains

pertains to *Sentiment* rather than the *Underſtanding*. And that *Imagination* which ſubſiſts only in Extention will have a Proſpect of a world of Things, and will not be able to make any advantage of its Views.

This particular Account makes us conceive clearly the Neceſſity there is for *Accuracy*, and the importance of this *Quality*. I allow that all the *Qualities* of the *Mind* are neceſſary, and that they all enter into the *Compoſition* of a *fine Genius*. It is the mixture of theſe Qualities that make a Work compleat. But this *mixture* muſt be ſuch, that no *Quality* may be *predominant*. We ought to be *ſtruck* with the *Beauty* of a *fine Peice*, without knowing to what preciſely, we owe the *Impreſſion*. And the *Diſpoſition* of every *Grace* ought to be ſo well order'd, that being touch'd with the *Beauty* of the whole, we ſhould not be able to attribute the Honour of the reflected Pleaſure to any one *Quality* of the *Mind* in particular.

This is my *Idea* of a compleat *Performance*, and according to this *Notion*,

tion, *Exactneſs* has only her ſhare in it, like the other *Qualities* of the *Mind*; or if you pleaſe, a little greater; becauſe it is ſhe who diſpoſes them in Order, and they cannot ſubſiſt without her Aſſiſtance.

The *Partiſans* of *Exactneſs* don't give this Advice. They will have her preſide ſo ſovereignly in all *Undertakings* as to exclude very near all the other *Qualities* of the *Mind*, and this is what happens generally to *Exactneſs*, when ſhe is not under ſome *Reſtriction*. It is not however the way to pleaſe, to obſerve in any work the Rules of a ſcrupulous *Accuracy*. Thoſe *Qualities* which are deſtin'd to go together, ought to make an *Harmony* amongſt themſelves; and that *Quality* which would exert it ſelf above the reſt, would not by the Pleaſure ſhe pretends to impart, make amends for that which would naturally flow from the Conſort of thoſe *Qualities*, which ſhe *ſtifles*. Whenſoever too rigorous an *Accuracy* is obſerv'd; it deſtroys the

the *Agreeableneſs* of *Delicacy*: For *Delicacy* will not allow that all ſhould be ſaid, and extream Accuracy requires ſo clear an *Idea* to be laid before the *Mind*, that no Doubts whatſoever ſhould remain. If this be ſo, *Accuracy* is a *Quality*, whoſe *Uſe* ought to be manag'd with Care, and there would be ſometimes an Art in not being ſo exact as one might be.

I muſt ſay one thing, which will appear ſingular to thoſe, who never were appriz'd of the Matter, and which tends to the limiting of *Exactneſs*; but above all, that ſort, which not only requires all *Arguments* to be *exact*; but likewiſe the *Principles* whence they are drawn. Pleaſantry is ſometimes the Effect of Falſhood. For Example, when we argue upon our Sentiments, as if they were at our own Command, we cauſe an agreeable Impreſſion; and it is this manner of reaſoning conſequentially to a *falſe Principle* which generally is ſo *diverting*. What is *falſe* is not diſagreeable to the Mind when

it

it is preſented to her for what it is; and altho' the *Mind* ſeldom argues upon any thing that pleaſeth her, ſhe ſeems infinitely delighted with ſubſtituting Truth in the room of Falſehood, which was offer'd to her for ſuch.

We hence perceive that the *Exactneſs* of the *Mind* is not the only *Quality* that can give us *Pleaſure*; and that *Error* which is in ſome ſort its *Oppoſite*, is capable of doing as much.

There are, however, ſome *Subjects* wherein we muſt be as *exact* as poſſible, and we muſt reſolve to lay aſide that *Quality* of the *Mind*, which is call'd *Delicacy*. When the *Subject* in Hand requires to be diſcuſs'd, and we are to treat of *ſubtil Ideas* difficult to compare; then we are to chuſe to be exact, and not to pretend to leave thoſe things to the *Mind's* conjecture, which though deliver'd with all Perſpicuity, will with much ado ſuffer themſelves to be apprehended. A Matter never ſo little perplex'd, affords

affords Exerciſe ſufficient wherewith to flatter our Vanity.

I do not, however, think that we ſhould ſeem to *ſink* under our *Subject*, how intricate ſoever it may be. An *abſtracted Matter* will not be treated in too gay a Manner; but on the other ſide, I would not have us pay any *Truth* ſo profound a Reſpect, as ſhould argue the little Familiarity we had ever with her. There are ſome People, who by the *formality* of a *ſtiff Expreſſion*, make you ſenſible of what Pain they endur'd before they became Maſters of their *Subject*. You ſee with what Conſtraint they make themſelves underſtood, and you are oblig'd to undergo the ſame. A *Reader* who deſires to be diverted, does not care to pay too dear for his Entertainment.

I have not always follow'd the Rules I have here laid down: I have made free ſometimes with *grave Matters*; and I believe I was to blame. It is a difficult Buſineſs ſo to behave ones ſelf as to pleaſe every Body.

What

What is divin'd by a Reader of Penetration, is not in the leaſt underſtood by another who is not ſo qualify'd; the Reſult of this is, one eſteems you, and the other deſpiſes you; Nature ſhould have diſpens'd the ſame reach of Judgment to all Men; and then we might have given our Ideas that Proportion of Delicacy, which cauſes us to be underſtood, and yet to be divin'd.

F I N I S.